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## What Russia Wants

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JOACHIM JOESTEN

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# What Russia Wants

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I



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# What Russia Wants



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## CHAPTER I

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# On the Threshold of Victory

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THE war in Europe has now reached a stage where we can, in broad outline, visualize the end and its immediate aftermath.

There can no longer be any doubt that the Axis will be conclusively defeated. The agony of the beaten aggressor states may be long, or it may be short; the end may be preceded by fearful convulsions, in which we may yet suffer unexpected reverses—or it may take the form of a sudden and total collapse. Whatever the course of military events may be in the months ahead, the issue has been decided.

The time then has come for the political leaders of the United Nations, if not for the military chiefs in the field, to pause and gaze beyond the tumult of battle to the horizons of peace and reconstruction.

Hitler's "New Order" could not, and did not, last long. It blew up like a punctured balloon. But the Old Order which it had superseded is also dead and gone. We still may cherish its memories—some of its memories at least—but we cannot call its shadow back from the Hades of History.

This is the first and fundamental fact to be faced by the makers of tomorrow's peace: no general restoration, no simple return to the status quo is possible. Any attempt at redrawing the map of Europe as it looked before Hitler,

or at restoring all dispossessed ownership, is doomed to certain failure.

I do not argue that a limited reversion to the state of affairs existing before the war is unfeasible or even undesirable. There is no reason why a country like, for example, Norway or Holland should not be restored to its former sovereignty and form of government. But it is clearly unthinkable that every small state that has been snuffed out in the battle of the titans will be given a new lease on life, or that every exiled monarch will be welcomed back to his throne.

After all, we live in the Twentieth Century. The Metternichs and Talleyrands went out of business a hundred years ago. The Congress of Vienna waltzes no more.

No, we cannot revive the Europe of 1932 any more than the most skilful physiologist can rejuvenate a centenarian. Nor can we set back the clock of human progress. That much we might have profitably learned from ~~Adolf~~ Hitler.

Much as they may loathe it, our democratic statesmen will have to shoulder the herculean task which the overweening dictators had set to themselves; they will have to devise and to build a New World Order. At that, their problem will be tenfold more difficult, for the world that Hitler and Mussolini left behind lies, literally and figuratively, in ruins.

It is the duty as well as the privilege of the victors to raise a new order on the ashes of the old. Nominally this task falls to the comity of United Nations whose joint effort has brought about the downfall of the Axis.

But it would be highly unrealistic to think the actual peace formula could be written by all of the thirty-odd nations who make up the Grand Alliance. No doubt all of them, down to the tiniest midget state, will be consulted

where their own interests are at stake, and all the major ones may be given a voice in the peace council.

Still it is evident that in the last resort the decision is bound to rest with the great powers that will emerge intact and victorious from this greatest trial of strength in history.

This is to say that France as well as the defeated Axis countries must be discounted as a great power until the time when her political, economic, and military system will be fully reconstituted.

China, on the other side, cannot be reckoned yet as one of the great powers, although she undoubtedly has great potentialities of becoming one in the not distant future.

To all practical purposes, then, the powers that will write the peace, and establish the new world order, are the United States, Great Britain, and Russia. It belongs to this mighty alliance between the world's foremost land power and the two leading sea powers to reach a settlement that will ensure peace and prosperity for generations to come—or, should they fail to come to terms, to plunge the world into still another, and even more disastrous, war.

#### THE EUROPEAN VACUUM

Any attempt to get at the roots of the present peace problem must start with the realization that Europe, in particular Central Europe, today is to all intents and purposes a vacuum. There is no established political, economic, or social order and no legitimate authority anywhere outside of the neutral enclaves of Sweden and Switzerland (in speaking of Europe I do not, of course, include the extra-European British Empire nor the Eurasian states, U.S.S.R. and Turkey).

For Hitler's New Order is no order at all. It is anarchy coupled with tyranny and improvisation. There is no law, no human right, no vested interest which the Nazi authori-

ties anywhere recognize as binding. The House That Hitler Built is in fact the most lawless and disorderly community of men in all history since troglodytic times.

More important still, the Nazi Revolution has all but obliterated the former ethnical pattern of Europe. It has not only blotted out all existing frontiers and forms of government, but has uprooted and transplanted tens of millions of men and women. First, in the name of racial purity, the Nazis tore millions of "Non-Aryans" from their homes and dumped them somewhere in the East; next, to secure more living space for the Master Race, they cleared entire regions—in Poland, France, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere—of their inhabitants; finally, in total disregard of their own racial concepts, they imported into the Reich some 12,000,000 foreigners—prisoners of war and slave laborers—thus creating in the heart of Europe the greatest racial hodgepodge of all times.

Add to all this the dislocation and confusion resulting from battles, bombings, and guerrilla warfare; the unprecedented destruction of life, health, and property; the mass peregrinations of refugees from all causes; the cultural devastation and all the other ravages of more than four years of war—and who can hope to recognize the traits of the Europe that was in the formless, bruised, and bloody mass of human misery left over from the Nazi experiment?

Into the vacuum thus created by the greatest and most destructive upheaval in modern history, the Allied armies of liberation will pour from all sides: the Red Army from the east, the American-British forces from the south, west, and north.

Somewhere in Europe these two allied drives must converge and meet, and since they are not united under a joint command, but operate independently of each other against

a common enemy, there is little chance of their merging into one controlling unit.

Rather, we must expect a situation not unlike that created in Poland in 1939 by the concurrent German and Russian drives from the west and from the east. Unless, therefore, it should be possible within the next few months to set up a joint Russo-Anglo-American High Command and a similar Joint Military Government of Occupied Territories—not a very likely assumption—a demarcation line will have to be drawn somewhere across Central Europe. On one side of the line the Russians will exercise control, on the other the Anglo-Americans.

This is, of course, a somewhat schematic and simplified design of the state of affairs in Europe after Hitler. It is quite possible, for instance, that between the Russian and Allied armies there will be, for a considerable time, a sort of No Man's Land in which guerrilla bands, "Free Corps," and the disintegrating remnants of the German Army fight for control. Such a free-for-all took place after the last war in the Baltic countries and in Silesia as well as in various parts of Russia, and years passed before peace and order were fully restored.

Again I must emphasize here that no one can foresee in detail what is going to happen in Europe toward the end of and after this war. But the contours of the picture have already emerged in clear enough relief to warrant a preliminary study of the fundamental issues involved.

There is another important reservation I wish to make. All that follows is based on the assumption that the present military alliance between Russia and the Western Powers will hold at least until Germany has been defeated. Should either side unexpectedly desert the other, conclude a separate peace with the Reich, and perhaps turn against the

former partner, all hope of a peaceful and durable settlement would probably have to be abandoned.

#### RUSSIA'S SHARE OF VICTORY

Even if the demarcation line should be easily agreed upon and scrupulously respected by both sides, the main problem would remain unsolved. A demarcation line, like an armistice, is only a preliminary step toward a lasting settlement. Sooner or later, the period of military occupation must end and a new order must be established.

What then shall be the face of the New Europe? How shall the bubbling, amorphous mass from Hitler's melting pot be molded? What forms of government, what economic and social systems shall be set up in the occupied or liberated countries?

The question of Europe's post-war shape and complexion is closely tied up with the equally unsettled issue of the Soviet Union's western boundaries. The two problems are interdependent and must be solved together either at a conference table or on a battlefield.

It is only natural that in a fighting partnership of diverse, or even disparate, elements such as the Soviet Union and the Western democracies each side should strive to get the upper hand and to exercise a determining influence at the peace conference.

In a friendly competition of this sort, the first argument advanced is likely to concern each partner's share of victory, to be measured by his contribution to the common cause. And the Russians, who are wont to measure achievement in terms of blood and human sacrifice rather than in dollars—in Stalin's own words: "Money is no substitute for blood,"—are apt to look down somewhat on an Allied balance sheet that shows a tremendous amount of material expended, but comparatively few dead or wounded soldiers.



Cyrus L. Sulzberger, in the *New York Times* of September 28, 1943, quoted a "prominent statesman" as depicting the coming peace conference in this fashion: "When F.D.R., Winston and Uncle Joe sit down to the peace table Uncle Joe is going to pose this question: 'And how many dead have you, my Allies?' and Winston will be able to say, 'Well, we've got about 750,000, but, you know, we are a naval empire and sea losses are never large.' And F.D.R. will say 'About 200,000.' Then Stalin will say: 'Yes, and we have 6,000,000—6,000,000 dead.' "

That is a fairly accurate vision of what we may expect to happen. Only, Mr. Sulzberger's statesman appears to have been a bit too conservative in his estimate of Soviet casualties. The figure of 6,000,000 dead may, by the time the war ends, cover Russia's military losses but would leave out of account the millions of civilians massacred in the course of the invasion or in three years of occupation. Actually, the Soviet authorities estimate that Russian civilian casualties match, if they do not exceed, those of the military. By the end of 1943, the grand total of Russian losses was estimated 10,000,000 dead, and still growing.

Stalin also may be expected to point to the tremendous material losses sustained by Russia. Hundreds of thousands of square miles of her most fertile and productive territory have been devastated by the enemy, whereas not an inch of the United States' or Britain's national territory has been invaded.

On the strength of these figures the Russians then will demand that their share of victory correspond to the burden which they have borne. In other words, they will want to cast a decisive vote—or veto—in any European peace settlement.

It will not be easy for America and Britain to counter such a claim effectively. The ratio of Allied and Russian

casualties may undergo a substantial change with the opening of a "real second front" in northwestern Europe, but it remains improbable that the grand total of Allied casualties will ever come anywhere near the staggering loss of life, limb and property sustained by the Russian nation.

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## CHAPTER II

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# What Russia Wants—and What Not . . .

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WE MUST realize, then, that Russia at the end of this war will be in an excellent bargaining position with respect to her allies. Militarily, she will be the predominant power on the European continent; morally, she will be able to rest her claims on the contention that the Red Army has made the greatest single contribution to the defeat of Germany.

A power so great and so determined can neither be ignored, nor can it be trifled with. It is entitled to the most serious and sympathetic consideration of its demands and desiderata.

This is not, of course, to say that Britain and America shall simply concede any and all Russian claims, fulfil all Russian wishes, and generally resign themselves to the role of silent, or junior, partners at the peace conference.

A fair and enduring solution of the immense problem now facing the world can only be reached if both Russia and the Anglo-Saxon powers clearly and frankly state their points of view, their desiderata, and their plans for the future. Once this has been done, and the merits or demerits of each case have been publicly argued, the way to an agreement evidently is the way of mutual concessions.

Well, then, just what does Russia want?

Before I attempt to answer this question in the light of published statements by Premier Joseph Stalin and of authoritative Soviet press utterances, let me dispose of two ingrained and popular misconceptions about Soviet foreign policy: that it is "enigmatic," and that it is "inconsistent."

It is true that Prime Minister Winston Churchill himself once described the Kremlin's foreign policy as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." Though it may seem presumptuous to argue with such an eminent authority, I do think that in this particular case the epigrammatist Churchill got the better of Churchill the statesman.

Actually, there is nothing mysterious or enigmatic about Russia's foreign policy which is, on the contrary, simple, straightforward, and down-to-earth. But there *is* a great deal of mystery and enigma on our side.

Nor is Soviet foreign policy inconsistent. While it is true that the early Bolshevik regime pursued a different course, a close study of Stalin's foreign policy shows a remarkable degree of consistency and even tenacity. Those sensational about-faces of the past, like the 1939 pact with Hitler, which have caused many people to look on Stalin as the limit in fickleness and unreliability, were "inconsistent" only from the Western point of view, but by no means from the Soviet standpoint.

Now let us consider the declared purposes and dislikes of Soviet Russia. To begin with the negative aspects of the question:

### 1. *Russia Does Not Want a Soviet Europe*

The idea, so dear to all our red-baiters and Bolshevik-bogey-peddlers, that the Russians want to "communize all of Europe" is in Moscow just about as dead as a doornail. The simple truth, which is readily accessible to all per-

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sons without prejudice and with a minimum of good will, is that Russia long since has ceased to be a revolutionary agent, becoming instead a nationalist and fairly conservative state built on a Socialist economy.

The fact of the matter is that Stalin is much too smart to plan for a Soviet Europe because he could not avoid "communizing" Germany in the process. And that, as I hope to show in a later chapter, is something Stalin is very anxious to avoid. For, while Soviet Russia after this war will have little trouble controlling a non-Soviet Germany, the position would be pretty soon reversed if the Reich were to go Communist.

Indeed, the Germans, with their extraordinary talent for organization, their resources, and their central position in Europe could be relied upon to use Communism as they have used Nazism, i. e., as an instrument of (world domination.) Within a few years, the center of gravity would shift from Moscow to Berlin. Soviet Russia would become an annex of Soviet Germany. And this is certainly not what the Russian nationalist Stalin has tenaciously worked and fought for.

Soviet Russia's conversion from a focus of world-revolutionary activities into a self-centered and strongly nationalist state began with Stalin's historic triumph over Trotsky in November, 1927, and has made progress ever since. With the formal dissolution of the Communist International in Moscow in May, 1943, this evolution has come to a natural climax.

"The abolition of the Comintern," commented Ambassador Joseph E. Davies in the *New York Times* of August 1, 1943, "was a definite act, confirming their expressed purpose to cooperate with, and not to stir up trouble for, their neighbors, with whom they are pledged to collaborate to win the war and the peace. It had particular significance to

foreign chancelleries, particularly in that it disclosed that the Soviet Union and its leaders had definitely set its face against world revolution and class warfare as a part of their national purpose, aims and policies."

2. *Russia Does Not Want a Reactionary Europe Either*

After the last war, Russia, amputated of Poland and of her Baltic borderlands, was kept at arm's length by the capitalist powers of Europe, behind what was called a *cordon sanitaire*, i. e., a string of potentially hostile buffer states.

This isolation continued, in one form or another, until the Soviet Union joined the League of Nations in September, 1934. In its early stage, the rigorous "quarantine" in which the Bolshevist regime was held by its capitalist neighbors repeatedly turned into futile attempts to overthrow the Soviets through armed intervention.

Ever since, the idea that all capitalist states are plotting to encircle, and at the first opportunity to destroy, the "first Socialist state" has been a national obsession in Soviet Russia. Hence the continuing mistrust of Anglo-American designs and the susceptibility to "encirclement" which is manifested in Moscow every time plans for an East European Federation or a similar combination of states in the Balkans come up for discussion.

Unfortunately it cannot be said that these suspicions are altogether unfounded. While there is considerable doubt whether any responsible statesman in this country or in Great Britain wants to encircle or quarantine Russia, there can be no question that influential circles in both countries still are toying with the idea of another *cordon sanitaire* in more or less camouflaged form.

Such plans are being entertained in particular in Catholic and ultra-Conservative circles where fears of a world revo-

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lution at the behest of "godless Russia" continue unabated.

What these people have in mind when they speak of a *cordon sanitaire* is roughly this:

Soviet Russia, after the war, is to be held within her boundaries of 1939. Between her and Western Europe where the victorious Anglo-Americans are expected to be in full control, a belt of post-Fascist and strongly anti-Bolshevist states will be established.

The nucleus of this sanitary belt is to be a Czecho-Polish-Hungarian federation under a seemingly democratic but in reality clerico-authoritarian regime, something like the Bruening government in pre-Hitler Germany, or the Dollfuss and Schuschnigg administrations in Austria.

To the west, our *cordon-sanitaire* builders envision another Catholic federation of Germanic states including Austria, Bavaria, and perhaps the Rhineland. (Prussia and other parts of Germany are to remain for a long time under Allied occupation.) Spain remains in her present condition, with a possible change-over from Franco's regime to a clerical monarchy. Italy is to be administered along similar lines, and France too, if it can be done.

North of this interesting combination, a Scandinavian federation including Finland is to act as a bulwark against a Soviet penetration to the Atlantic, and to the south a Balkan federation ruled by pretty much the same sort of people as before the war is expected similarly to keep Russian influence out of the Mediterranean.

Childish and futile as such a scheme is, it appeals to an amazing number of otherwise sensible persons whose minds are obsessed with an unreasoned fear of Bolshevism. But the idea is not only absurd; it is full of explosive potentialities. Apparently its proponents fail to understand that if the 1920 *cordon sanitaire* was unable to keep a weak and defeated Russia within bounds, the victorious and im-

mensely powerful Russia of today and tomorrow could easily make short shrift of any combination of buffer states that even the most ingenious planners could devise.

Needless to say, not for one moment will Moscow stand for the establishment of anti-Soviet and reactionary governments anywhere in Eastern or Central Europe. What is likely to happen to small countries cooperating in any such schemes was graphically expressed by Czechoslovakia's astute President Eduard Beneš when he recently said: "*Cordons sanitaires* can only become ribbons on the funeral flowers of the states that compose the cordons." A somewhat mixed metaphor perhaps, but a very judicious idea.

Passing now from the negative to the positive side of our problem, what do the Russians want? What are the war aims, and the peace objectives, of our great Soviet ally?

For a sound approach to this momentous question we must begin with a succinct study of the peculiar ethnical and constitutional structure of the U.S.S.R.

First, let me make a linguistic, but by no means unimportant, point. I have hitherto followed the general usage and spoken of *Russia* and the *Russians*, even where I ought to have used the terms *U.S.S.R.* and *Soviets*. Such laxity is frowned upon in Moscow, and not without reason. For it is really quite wrong to use these terms interchangeably as if they were synonymous. They are not.

Russia, in fact, is a thing of the past. The Russians still exist, but they represent only one, though the preponderant, race in a compound of nationalities. Their body politic, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (R.S.F.S.R.), is but one of sixteen equal republics that make up the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

It is thus, strictly speaking, quite as incorrect for us to speak of "our Russian allies," or to suggest that "Russian"



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influence in post-war Europe should be kept within bounds, as it would be for a Soviet citizen to speak of Lend-Lease supplies received from New Yorkers, or of the possibility that Texan influence might become too strong in post-war Japan.

But the tongue is a great tyrant, and a very conservative one at that. It is a lazy tyrant too, with a foible for easy and melodious cadences. Neither *Soviet* nor *U.S.S.R.* (much less the unabbreviated form) have as yet become fully acclimatized in the English language and it is for this sole reason, without any political implications whatsoever, that I shall continue to follow the current usage in the matter.

However, our preference for the easier and long-established words ought not to make us overlook the tremendous difference involved. When the early Bolsheviks changed their country's name from *Russia* to *Soviet Union*, they were not concerned with linguistic chicanery. They were making history.

Other nations, too, have adopted new (or rather ancient) names for their countries after the last war: Persia changed hers back to the old Iran; Siam once more became Thailand. In both instances, it mattered about as much as if the Kingdom of Tweedledum had changed its name to Tweedledee.

Not so with the U.S.S.R. The four letters stand for *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*. Note that this name makes no reference whatever to any particular nationality or geographical location. In fact, it is the only proper name of any country in the world that reveals nothing about where it is situated or by whom it is populated. What it does indicate, by contrast, is a political and social regime distinct from the rest of the world.

A few examples will help to make this point clear. France, or *République Française*, are terms clearly defining a state

for Frenchmen; Germany, or *Deutsches Reich*, is quite as unequivocal; the United States of America is by definition a commonwealth of the Western Hemisphere; "United Kingdom," while of itself also a vague designation, merely applies to a component part of the British Empire.

Only the U.S.S.R. or Soviet Union is not limited by its very name to a particular nation, or a particular continent. We may take it for granted that the choice of such a flexible, noncommittal name by the founding fathers of the world's first Socialist state was not accidental. At the time, the Soviets were openly headed for world revolution, so they took care not to set up barriers to the admission into their commonwealth of newcomers from any part of the globe. In principle, any country in the world could apply for membership and could be received.

The practical importance of this elastic setup was demonstrated in 1940. Up to that year, the U.S.S.R. comprised eleven union republics all of which had been associated with it, in one form or another, since the days of the civil war. These original constituents were: 1. Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. 2. Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. 3. Byelorussian S.S.R. (White Russia). 4. Armenian S.S.R. 5. Georgian S.S.R. 6. Azerbaijanian S.S.R. 7. Uzbek S.S.R. 8. Turkmen S.S.R. 9. Tadjik S.S.R. 10. Kazakh S.S.R. 11. Kirghiz S.S.R.

In addition to these eleven nationalities (and the five mentioned below), which have achieved what we would call full statehood in the Union, the Soviet Union comprises some forty other "recognized nationalities," grouped in autonomous republics and autonomous regions, and at least a hundred racial splinters. At the present moment, the huge R.S.F.S.R., which contains nearly seventy percent of the total population and seventy-eight percent of the territory of the U.S.S.R. and stretches like a broad belt across

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two continents from ocean to ocean, is subdivided into fifteen autonomous republics and six autonomous regions. The Georgian S.S.R. includes two autonomous republics; Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan one each. The other union republics have only autonomous regions, if any.

At the close of the Finnish war, in the spring of 1940, a twelfth union republic, the Karelo-Finnish S.S.R., was formed, shortly followed by a thirteenth (Moldavian S.S.R.); then, in rapid succession, the formerly independent states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were incorporated as fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth constituent republics of the U.S.S.R.

How these various annexations came about and whether or not they were justified will be discussed in detail in the following chapters. Here I want only to point out, as one of the fundamental factors to be considered in any post-war settlement, that since 1940, under the amended Constitution of the U.S.S.R., Karelia, Bessarabia, Eastern Poland, and the three Baltic countries have been integral parts of the Soviet Union. And that, as full-blown union republics, it is argued that they have enjoyed, and will enjoy in the future, the greatest measure of political and cultural autonomy possible within the framework of the U.S.S.R.

Now let us have a look at Russia's avowed objectives.

### 1. *Restoration of the 1941 frontiers of the U.S.S.R.*

There can be absolutely no doubt that the Soviet government will insist on the restoration of every bit of territory that belonged to the Union at the start of the Nazi invasion. In other words, all the sixteen constituent republics—one half of which have been wholly or partly occupied by the Germans in the course of this war—will be reclaimed in full by the Russians.

Some of our post-war planners, who are still hoping that

the "Baltic question" or the "Polish question" or half a dozen other territorial questions can be negotiated with Moscow, point to the absence of any official Soviet declaration specifically laying claim to Eastern Poland, Karelia, the Baltic countries, and Bessarabia. There have even been a few, wholly unsubstantiated assertions that Russia had implicitly renounced this or that of her western borderlands.

It is true that thus far no formal statement has come from the Kremlin as to Russia's peace aims, territorial or other. But Premier Joseph Stalin, in several of his most important speeches of recent years, has touched on Russia's territorial ambitions in unmistakable fashion. And every student of Russian affairs knows that the key to Soviet thought and actions can always be found in Stalin's addresses.

Now, it is highly significant that beginning with his first war speech of July 3, 1941 Stalin has consistently enumerated the various Soviet nationalities that Hitler wanted to enslave and the Red Army was going to liberate. Here are a few tell-tale excerpts:

The enemy is cruel and implacable. He is out to seize our lands watered with our sweat, to seize our grain and oil secured by our labor. He is out to restore the rule of the landlords, to restore Tsarism, to destroy the national culture and national state existence of Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, *Lithuanians, Letts, Estonians, Tartars, Uzbeks, Moldavians, Georgians, Armenians, Azerbaidjanians*, and the other free people of the Soviet Union, to Germanize them, to convert them into slaves of German princes and barons. . . . [July 3, 1941]

We have not nor can we have such war aims as the seizure of foreign territories or the conquest of other peoples, irrespective of whether European peoples and territories or Asiatic peoples and territories, including Iran, are concerned. Our first aim is to liberate our territories and our peoples from the German Nazi yoke.

We have not nor can we have such war aims as the imposition of our will and our regime on the Slavic and other enslaved

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peoples of Europe who are waiting for our help. Our aim is to help these peoples in their struggle for liberation from Hitler's tyranny, and then to accord them the possibility of arranging their lives on their own lands as they think fit, with absolute freedom. No interference of any kind with the domestic affairs of other nations! [November 6, 1941]

The day is not distant when the powerful blows of the Red Army will raise the siege of Leningrad, will clear the Germans from the towns and villages of Byelo-Russia and the Ukraine, *Lithuania* and *Latvia*, *Estonia* and *Karelia*, will free the Soviet Crimea, and the Red Banners will again victoriously fly over the whole Soviet land. [February 23, 1942]

Comrades, we are waging a patriotic war of liberation, a just war. We do not set ourselves the aim of seizing foreign countries, of conquering foreign peoples. *Our aim is clear and noble.* We want to liberate our Soviet land from the German fascist scoundrels. We want to liberate our brothers, the Ukrainians, *Moldavians*, Byelorussians, *Lithuanians*, *Letts*, *Estonians* and *Karelians*, from the disgrace and humiliation to which they are subjected by the German fascist scoundrels. [May 1, 1942] [My italics throughout]

These, and other more recent, statements by the Soviet Premier—in particular his address to the Red Army on February 22, 1943—make it perfectly clear that Stalin, and therefore the Soviet government, draws no distinction whatever between the eleven original Soviet republics and the five annexed in 1940. The Soviet press, which usually elaborates and hammers home the points made in Stalin's speeches, never has left the slightest room for doubt in the matter: Russia's first and foremost war aim, one from which she will not desist or detract under any circumstances, is restoration of the Union's 1941 territorial status quo.

This Russian insistence on territories acquired in 1939 and 1940, either openly by force or by means of elections whose constitutionality and democratic procedure are certainly open to question, is not popular in this country. Most

people, including many whose attitude toward the Soviet Union is basically sympathetic, feel that the methods employed by Moscow in the acquisition of those territories smacked strongly of the ways of Hitler and Mussolini. And it is only natural for those who condemn the methods of annexation also to repudiate the territorial status thus achieved.

There is reason to believe that this stand toward the Russian frontier problem, which, in principle, is probably shared by a majority of the American people, also inspires the President's and the State Department's post-war policies. At any rate, it is a fact that the United States thus far has not recognized the territorial aggrandizement of the Soviet Union in 1939-1940, and that it has as yet shown no inclination to do so in the near future.

We are here faced with two diametrically opposed and apparently irreconcilable conceptions. The Russians, while they are not too argumentative about the manner in which the 1939-1940 annexations have been achieved, staunchly contend that the territorial status resulting from them wholly corresponds to the will of the populations and is justified on ethnical and historical grounds. There is, as I hope to show in the following chapters, a good deal to be said in favor of this argument.

On the other hand, the moral position of those who hold that unlawful acquisition vitiates the Soviet Union's title to its 1941 boundaries is undeniably strong; it would be even more so if supported by evidence that the peoples of the annexed lands are overwhelmingly opposed to the Soviet rule.

A question, or rather a set of questions, so complex and involved cannot be judged without a thorough study of the historical, ethnographical and other underlying facts. I shall, therefore, reserve any appraisal of Russia's claims

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to this or that territory in dispute for later chapters specifically dealing with each case.

It must be said, here and now, however, that this is not merely a question of law and morals. It is a matter of peace or war, possibly one of life and death for the Western world. Puritans and sticklers for abstract principles may never concede Russia's title to her 1941 boundaries; but statesmen who know what is worth fighting for and what not, cannot afford to adopt such an intransigent attitude.

Besides, we might as well admit that no great power is in a safe moral position to throw stones at Russia. If the United States and Great Britain asked of the U.S.S.R. to relinquish this or that part of its national territory merely because it was acquired by force, there might be awkward retorts concerning Puerto Rico, Panama, Hawaii, or about Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus and what not.

That the Soviets are ready to turn the tables on any country questioning the legitimacy of their title to the 1941 boundaries has already been made plain by their press. For instance, on October 13, 1943—on the eve of the Moscow conference of Foreign Secretaries—*Pravda* declared: "It should be known to every one, that the borders of the Soviet Union could no more serve as a subject of discussion than, for instance, the borders of the United States or the status of California."

To which, on October 21, the *New York Herald Tribune* editorially replied: "When *Pravda* announced last week that the question of Russia's borders or the Baltic States could no more be discussed at Moscow than the status of California, it was hitting not so far from the mark. California, after all, was acquired by conquest, just as much as were Russia's western marches; many American claims rest on no surer a foundation than do those of Russia, while Russia has quite as vital an interest in her own security as

we have in ours. Our interests in Panama, the Caribbean, or the Monroe Doctrine—which we would not for a moment submit to discussion—are no more important to us than are similar Russian interests to the Russians.”

Then, turning to “the freedom with which Americans, British, and Japanese intervened in Russian affairs after the last war,” the *Herald Tribune* continued: “The settlements at that time—which stripped Russia of Finland, the Baltic territories, and Poland—took most of her northern seaports and left the Finns with a stranglehold over Lenin-grad, the greatest of them. It was rather as if the United States should lose the whole New England coast and see a weak foreign power installed in New Jersey, thus commanding the entrances to New York. It is fantastic to suppose that Russia would accept the re-establishment of that situation after the victorious conclusion of a war which has cost her so frightful a toll in life and wealth and in which she has played the one greatest part. That Russia intends to safeguard her security in the post-war world, there can be no doubt . . .”

## 2. *Peace With Security*

The Russians are at heart a peace-loving nation. They are certainly not going to pick tomorrow a wanton quarrel with the powerful British-American coalition. No doubt, under the Soviet regime the Russian has become more disciplined, more soldierly and conscious of his strength than he was under the Tsarist rule, but even so there is nothing to indicate that his fundamental attitude toward peace and war has changed.

Unlike the German Army, which is traditionally imbued with the spirit of aggression and is much better at fighting an offensive war than a defensive one, the Red Army has proved to be preeminently an instrument of defense. Even



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where it excelled in offensive fighting as in the winter campaigns of 1941–1942 and 1942–1943, and in the summer drive of 1943, the Red Army was waging a defensive war, to clear the soil of Mother Russia from the invaders.

The experience of earlier battles also shows that the Red Army is not an instrument of conquest, but unsurpassed in defense of the homeland. It fought well, frequently against heavy odds, in the Civil War, the war with Poland of 1920–1921 and in the bitter clashes with the Japanese in 1939, but it gave only a moderately good account of itself in the Finnish campaign of 1939–1940, the sole instance on record where it was sent to fight outside the Soviet frontiers. (The Russian seizure of Eastern Poland in the fall of 1939 was a mopping-up operation rather than a war.)

If the Red Army was trained for defense rather than for offense, and therefore must be set down as a peace-preserving factor, much the same consideration applies to the Soviet government as such. For twenty-two years after its establishment, the Soviet power pursued a patient and persistent peace policy, often against strong provocation. And when at last it resorted to war against Finland in the winter of 1939, what then looked like unadulterated aggression was in reality the school example of a *preventive war* as has since been conclusively demonstrated by the Finnish record and by the march of events (for further, detailed information on this point see Chapter VI).

This indisputable will to peace of the Soviet people and government, which after the end of the present war will be enhanced by the necessities of relief and rehabilitation for the liberated areas, is one of the greatest assets in favor of an amicable post-war settlement. But it would be hazardous to gamble on the Soviet government's will to peace being stronger than its determination to see the pre-war frontiers of the U.S.S.R. fully restored.

Russia's profound desire for peace is coupled, as it has been in the past, with an equally strong craving for national security. From the very day of its birth, the Soviet State has continually lived in dread of just such an international crusade as Germany, Italy, Finland, Rumania, and the other Nazi satellites set in motion on June 21, 1941.

There was a time when it looked to the Soviets as though the chief organizer of the world crusade against Bolshevism would be France, or Great Britain, or even the United States. These fears sprang partly from the memory of the abortive Allied interventions in the years 1918-1920, partly from the persistent, violent, and apparently concerted campaigns which reactionary French, British, and American papers conducted—and, in a few cases, still conduct—against the Soviet Union.

Later, after Hitler's rise to power, British sponsorship of the Four-Power-Pact idea, followed by the inglorious era of appeasement, convinced the Kremlin that the Western democracies, while too weak to undertake themselves the extermination of Bolshevism, were only too glad to give the Führer a free hand in the East. Thus, with one thing or another, the Russians' inveterate suspicion that all the capitalist states were committed to the destruction of the Bolshevik regime by fire and sword never quite vanished and the feeling of national insecurity grew alarmingly.

It might be objected at this point that after the elimination of Nazi Germany and Japan the Russians have nothing more to worry about, since they are now firmly allied to the only two remaining great powers, Britain and the United States.

Certainly, but the trouble is that the Russians have become very suspicious of the durability of alliances and that they are always inclined to take a long-term view of any given situation. Unless, therefore, we succeed in rooting

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out forever from the Russian mind the idea that capitalist states necessarily must plot the overthrow of a Socialist competitor, this suspicion, and the resulting feeling of insecurity, will linger on.

But, some other people will say, isn't the Soviet Union on its way back to capitalism? This fanciful idea, nourished by such freak incidents as the recent gift by a Kirghiz farmer of 1,000,000 rubles to the Red Army fund, is particularly popular with those capitalists and big businessmen who are too smart to believe that Russia is out to "communize all of Europe," but nevertheless fail to understand the true character of the Soviet State.

The fact of the matter is that Russia, while she has definitely shed her world-revolutionary skin, is becoming more intensely Socialist—or Communist, if you wish—by the day. There is not the slightest indication that Stalin or any other prominent member of the Soviet government has ceased to believe in the superiority of the planned Socialist economy over capitalism or that they in any way plan to end the collectivization of agriculture.

Thus, the vital question with which the world will be faced even more strongly after this war than in the past twenty-five years is this: can the system of planned Socialist economy peacefully coexist with the system of capitalism and private enterprise?

Perhaps we can find the answer to this grave question in the field of religion. There was a time when the world seemed too small to hold both the Christian and the Moslem faiths. Both sides swore to exterminate each other in holy crusades—and they almost did. Yet today, centuries later, the Christian, the Hebrew, the Moslem, the Buddhist, and many other faiths and confessions peacefully coexist and no person in his right mind still dreams of waging a religious war.

And, as men finally have learned that they cannot make converts by fire and sword, so we must learn, all of us, that we cannot win recruits for either Socialism or private enterprise by devastating each other's heritage with shells and bombs.

Russia, by burying the Comintern, already has demonstrated her willingness to forego all dreams of world revolution and to collaborate with the capitalist states. The least we can do in return is to bury all plans of renewed intervention in Russia and to do away once and for all with the silly and dangerous idea of the *cordon sanitaire*. Thus, and thus alone, can we give Russia that feeling of national security which is an indispensable prerequisite for a lasting peace.

### 3. *A Voice in the Reorganization of Europe*

Every country is deeply concerned with the political outlook and mentality of its neighbors; every great power sees to it that its smaller neighbors do not become tools of its potential enemies. Would the United States look on while a Nazi dictatorship established itself in Canada or Mexico? Would it tolerate a revolutionary hotbed in Cuba or in the Bahamas?

In the same way we cannot expect a triumphant Soviet Russia to tolerate in her dooryard reactionary monarchies, semi-Fascist republics, or clerico-feudal autocracies. It is self-evident and natural that she will seek to surround herself with a belt of bordering states that are, if not like-minded, at least sympathetic and cooperative. And is she not entitled, after the harrowing experiences of the past, to seek security in friendly surroundings?

While this legitimate aspiration of Russia has not met, thus far, with much understanding in America, it has al-

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ready deeply influenced British thought and diplomacy. This new trend has found its most notable expression to date in two remarkable editorials published by the London *Times* on March 10 and 23, 1943.

The first of these editorials, entitled "Security in Europe," caused a world-wide sensation, and no wonder. For the thesis expounded in it was nothing short of revolutionary considering the record of the things and opinions the *Times* used to stand for in the past.

Yet anyone with an open and unbiased mind will heartily agree with these observations formulated by a paper that not even the most fanatic red-baiters could possibly describe as smitten with radicalism;

There can be no security in Western Europe unless there also is security in Eastern Europe; security in Eastern Europe is unattainable unless it is buttressed by the military power of Russia.

To suppose that Britain and the United States, with the aid of some lesser European powers, could maintain permanent security in Europe through a policy which alienated Russia and induced her to disinterest herself in continental affairs would be sheer madness.

The pre-eminent responsibility for European security rests on the two powers situated on the confines of Europe (Britain and Russia). This is the sense and significance of the Eden-Molotov treaty of May 26, 1942.

*If Britain's frontier is on the Rhine, Russia's frontier is on the Oder, and in the same sense.*

This does not mean that Russia, any more than Britain, desires to assail the independence of other countries or to control their domestic affairs. On the contrary, it must stand to reason that Russian security will be best served by an understanding with peoples who have themselves good cause to look to Russia for security.

*The sole interest of Russia is to assure herself that her outer defenses are in sure hands; and this interest will be best served*

if the lands between her frontiers and those of Germany are held by governments and peoples friendly to herself. *That is one condition on which Russia must and will insist.* [My italics]

It is many months since these lines were written but they still make as good sense today as when they first appeared in the *Times*. Unfortunately, however, the self-evident truths so pertinently expressed by the London paper have not yet penetrated the minds of some very highly placed personalities, especially in this country. The *Times* suspected that much when it wrote its famous editorial: "There is a small minority of people in this country who, undeterred by the thought of playing into Hitler's hands, are still impressed by the Bolshevist bogey, just as there probably is a small minority of Russians who still believe that British capitalism is a standing menace to Soviet Russia."

This observation applies to American-Russian relations as well, perhaps in even greater degree. Said the *Times*: "The chances of making mischief have been swollen by the official hesitations of both Britain and America to recognize that Russia will, at the moment of victory so largely due to her outstanding effort, enjoy the same right as her allies to *judge for herself of the conditions which she deems necessary for the security of her frontiers.*" [My italics]

This momentous pronouncement on British post-war policy occurred on the eve of a visit to Washington by the British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden for conferences on "post-war problems" with the President, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, and the Soviet Ambassador Maxim M. Litvinov.

The coincidence was not lost on the American newspapers some of which reacted sharply to the London paper's suggestions. Feelings ran so high that the British Embassy in Washington found it convenient to declare that

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the *Times* editorial did not represent Mr. Eden's views. The incident is characteristic of what happens whenever some enlightened personality or newspaper cuts loose from the current prejudices about Russia and gives voice to considerations of common sense and real friendship.

Even the *New York Times*, convinced that its London namesake in this instance "expressed more nearly the Russian than the British point of view," lashed out at "any proposal to put the small nations of Europe on the auction block in order to purchase Russian confidence and cooperation." The paper, in an extraordinary fit of ill humor even went so far as to bracket the "Communist Trojan Horse" with the Nazi Fifth Column and to predict that the nations of Europe, if forced to choose, "may choose ~~Hitler~~ rather than Stalin."

Much in the same vein, the *Washington Post* saw Russia angling for "a long and immense glacis from the Baltic to the Aegean," and asserted that Russia's war aims were pivoted on the "Russification in one way or another" of this strip of territory.

Such ill-considered utterances as these serve best to illustrate what a long distance American public opinion still has to travel before even a basic understanding on Russia's post-war objectives can be reached. They indicate a complete misconception of Russian policy which aims neither at "communizing" nor at "Russifying" the rest of Europe but merely desires to achieve security on the basis of the 1941 territorial status quo.

Perhaps the best approach to Russia's security problem would be to appraise it in terms of American premises of security. Aside from its favored geographical position, the United States has rested its security mainly on two pillars: the Monroe Doctrine and the Good Neighbor Policy. A

third, which does not, however, supplant either of the two aforementioned, but rather serves to supplement them, is the alliance with Great Britain.

Similarly, we can expect Russia after this war to proclaim (or to lay down without formal declaration) a sort of Red Monroe Doctrine the gist of which will be: (a) to bar non-European countries from intervening by force in the domestic affairs of European nations; and (b) to extend a protective hand over revolutionary movements aiming at the overthrow of Fascist dictatorships, reactionary monarchies, and, possibly in some cases, of the capitalist system as well.

This latter point requires some qualification. While it is quite possible that Russia will favor the establishment of Soviet or Soviet-like regimes in a security zone bordering on her 1941 frontiers—a sort of *cordon sanitaire* in reverse—all indications are that she does not want to go further and communize all of Europe, or even the whole world. Why this is so, I have already stated, and will discuss again in the next chapter, dealing with the concrete example of Germany.

In this respect again, we have one of Stalin's significant speeches to guide us to the real meaning of that "mysterious" Soviet foreign policy. Indeed, in his historic address of November 6, 1942, to the Moscow Soviet the Premier drew up this "program of action of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition": "Abolition of racial exclusiveness, equality of nations and integrity of their territories, liberation of enslaved nations and restoration of their sovereign rights, the right of every nation to arrange its affairs as it wishes, economic aid to nations that have suffered and assistance to them in attaining their material welfare, restoration of democratic liberties, the destruction of the Hitlerite regime."



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This, to be sure, is the program of action not just of Russia alone, but of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition. While it does not perhaps tell the whole story of Soviet war aims, the fact that Stalin here expressed his program in terms that President Roosevelt or Prime Minister Churchill might have used word for word is highly significant and reassuring.

A program of this nature would seem definitely to commit the Soviet Union to a Good Neighbor Policy in Europe and elsewhere. There is no inherent conflict between such a policy and the broader "Monroe Doctrine" stand, as the example of the United States in the Western Hemisphere has conclusively shown. In point of fact, the two policies concur toward the same goal and supplement one another. A third, additional element of security again might be, in the case of the U.S.S.R. as in that of the United States, the alliance with the great conservative power of Great Britain.

Speaking of a Good Neighbor Policy, it stands to reason that this is not a one-sided affair. The United States would not be able to practice such a policy toward the smaller countries of Central and South America if these, or only a group of them, banded together to fight off American influence in the hemisphere, or even by force to alter American institutions and to end the American way of life.

Neither can the Soviet Union be expected to be friends and good neighbors with semi-Fascist, clerico-feudal, or otherwise anti-Soviet states. It will indeed insist on having a voice in the reorganization of Europe and will see that its immediate neighbors are, if not of like constitution and mentality, at least not unfriendly and at the service of hostile powers.

For, as the London *Times* said, Russia's frontier is on the Oder in the same sense as Britain's is on the Rhine.

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## CHAPTER III

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# Russia and Germany

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FOR RUSSIA, as for her Western allies, the core of all planning for post-war security and stability is the fateful question: What shall we do with Germany? In defeat, as it would have been in victory, Germany remains the crux of all Russian problems.

That this is so, the map tells us as convincingly as does the study of history. Russia, which is essentially an extra-European power, has since the days of Peter the Great constantly sought to benefit from the material progress and intellectual emancipation achieved by the more advanced West. The chief transmitter of Western influences and Western civilization to Russia has been Germany. Thanks to her controlling position in the heartland of Europe, Germany can be either the bridge that links Russia to the West, or the barrier that keeps the two apart.

In the past, Russia and Germany have been more often associated in common pursuits than divided by war. They have constantly needed one another economically. As an anonymous but evidently authoritative writer in *Foreign Affairs* (January, 1942) puts it: "There is hardly another instance of such close economic symbiosis."

The foundation for this interdependence was laid in the Middle Ages by the ~~Drang nach Osten~~ of the Teutonic Knights, who in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries spread

German culture and German institutions from the Oder to the Dwina. The Hanseatic League also contributed powerfully to this penetration, setting up factories on Russian soil as far as Novgorod, and trading Russia's furs and timber for the products of German handicraft. It was the Hanse's influence that caused the first budding of democratic conceptions in Eastern Europe and led the city of Kiev in 1499 to secure the "Magdeburg Right" of self-government, Free Trade, and of having its own courts of law.

Later, in the eighteenth century, the Empress Catherine the Great, who herself was of German stock, invited thousands of German colonists to settle in the vast, little-developed reaches of Southern Russia. Thus arose the compact German settlements of the Ukraine and the Volga, of which the largest, in the Saratov region, became after the Revolution the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of the Volga Germans. Here some 400,000 to 450,000 Germans enjoyed wide cultural autonomy until the Soviet government in August, 1941, grew suspicious of their loyalty and abolished the autonomous republic. Practically the entire population was removed to Far Eastern districts—a hard but prudent measure which helped to save nearby Stalingrad by eliminating a potential fifth column.

As long as the Germans came to Russia as peaceful pioneers, they were given a hospitable and friendly reception by the native population. Russia had plenty of fertile, untilled land and the German settlers who brought with them new implements and methods of cultivation were welcome to a share in the great potential wealth of the Tsarist Empire.

It was not until the growth of German imperialism in the latter part of the nineteenth century that relations between Germany and Russia became strained. Bismarck, though himself a dyed-in-the-wool imperialist, rejected the

idea of a forcible German expansion to the east at the risk of alienating Moscow; with him, it was a dogma that Germany and Russia must remain on good terms.

After Bismarck's fall, the champions of a new *Drang nach Osten* got the upper hand with the result that twice in one generation Germany has made the attempt to conquer living space in the east, at a cost of millions of lives, and to no avail.

Hitler gave this fixed idea a new impetus and a new "ideological" meaning. "We terminate the endless German drive to the south and west of Europe," he wrote in *Mein Kampf*, "and direct our gaze toward the lands in the east. We finally terminate the colonial and trade policy of the pre-war period and proceed to the territorial policy of the future. And when we talk about new soil and territory in Europe today, we can think primarily only of Russia and its vassal border states."

#### THE CRAZY COLONIZER AND HIS "OSTLAND"

One of the symptoms of dictator-paranoia is an uncontrollable desire to revamp the ethnographical map of the world. The despot who has achieved military control over a vast area is irritated by what he considers a crazy quilt of nationalities: two hostile races inextricably intertwined on a territory claimed by both; a national minority jutting wedge-like into the domain of another people; chips of a great nation scattered far and wide in neighboring or distant countries.

The dictator doesn't like it. He wants neat, clear-cut lines, one people, one language, one führer here; another people, another language, another führer there. He conceives a plan, sets up a commission, issues orders and sets the jigsaw puzzle right. It means nothing to him that his operation

cruelly breaks up established homes and uproots men from the beloved lands of their forefathers.

Acting on these principles, Hitler conceived the grandiose plan of reuniting the Volga Germans, and the scattered German settlements in the Ukraine, with the Reich by Germanizing the huge expanse of land lying in between. The Germanization was to be accompanied through the physical extermination or removal of the native inhabitants and the wholesale colonization of the emptied lands with German and other "Nordic" settlers, meaning selected Nazis from Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and other Germanic countries.

This policy, which had already been applied on a minor scale in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and other conquered countries, reached a tragic climax in the Ostland venture, one of the bloodiest, costliest, and most senseless colonizing enterprises in history. Its awe-inspiring stupidity and fiasco are matched only by the parallel undertaking of the Crazy Colonizer in the south of Russia, the "Germanization" of the Ukraine.

The speed and precision with which the Nazis reorganized the conquered Soviet territories, as fast as the panzer armies could occupy them, suggests a long-prepared and minutely elaborated plan of seizure. As early as July 17, 1941—barely four weeks after the start of the invasion—Hitler signed a decree creating the Ostland as a new administrative unit, under the rule of Reichskommissar Heinrich Lohse, the former Gauleiter of Schleswig-Holstein.

As the German armies rolled on eastward and southward, the Ostland continually expanded and its administrative structure took clearer shape. By September, 1941, the pattern of Hitler's New Order in Eastern Europe had been fully evolved.

At the top of all conquered territories in the east, Hitler placed his chief ideological adviser, Alfred Rosenberg, a native of Tallinn, or Reval, Estonia, who originally was a Russian subject and, like so many other Baltic Germans, became a fanatical hater of Russia and all things Russian.

Rosenberg's official title was Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete, (Minister for the Occupied Territories in the East); he was responsible only to the Führer. His Ministry, with headquarters at the former Soviet Embassy in Berlin, comprised two branches: the Reichskommissariat Ostland under Hinrich Lohse, and the Reichskommissariat Ukraine under Erich Koch. The Ostland was divided into four general commissariats, the Ukraine into six Generalbezirke. Both were further subdivided into regional commissariats.

While the Ukrainian Generalbezirke—Zhitomir, Kiev, Nikolaev, Dniepropetrovsk, Volhynia, and Crimea (Teilbezirk Taurien) corresponded by and large to the territory of the former Ukrainian S.S.R., except that the Crimea used to be an autonomous Soviet republic and that the Kharkov and Chernigov regions were placed by the Germans under military administration, the Ostland was artificially made up of diverse elements: the former independent states of Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and the Byelo-Russian S.S.R. (White Russia), which the Germans renamed White Ruthenia. The long-disputed Vilna district of Lithuania was also included in the Ostland, as part of the Generalkommissariat Litauen.

Like the two Reich Commissars, the general and regional commissars were mostly veterans of the Nazi party. In the Ostland, for instance, Latvia was ruled by the former mayor of Lübeck, Otto Heinrich Drechsler; Estonia by the S.A. General Karl Sigismund Litzmann, a son of General Karl Litzmann who distinguished himself in the last war; Lithu-

ania's boss was Dr. Adrian von Renteln; the General Commissar for White Ruthenia was Wilhelm Kube, one of the most disreputable figures in the Nazi movement. On September 22, 1943, as the Red Army was nearing the border of White Russia, Kube was assassinated in Minsk, probably by guerrillas.

From the moment of their arrival, this hierarchy of commissars conducted itself in the Ostland and the Ukraine in a manner unparalleled in modern history. Ruthlessly applying their theories about the German ~~master~~ race and the God-willed inferiority of all Eastern races, the commissars systematically set out to extirpate Russians, White Russians, and Ukrainians by fire and sword.

The inconceivable barbarities committed in the Eastlands by ~~Alfred~~ Rosenberg's henchmen have been painstakingly recorded and graphically described by a special Soviet investigating body with the lengthy title: Extraordinary State Committee for the ascertaining and investigation of crimes committed by the German-Fascist invaders and their associates, and the damages caused by them to citizens, collective farms, public organizations, State enterprises, and institutions of the U.S.S.R.

While it is not the purpose of this book to go into the details of the Nazi atrocities in Russia, I wish to quote here one characteristic eyewitness account by a resident of the White Russian city of Gomel which was reported in the Information Bulletin of the Soviet Embassy in Washington of September 2, 1943, under the title "Death of a City":

Gomel in 1943 resembles a vast, neglected cemetery. Its population of 150,000 has been reduced to barely 10,000, and even these people do not live in the town itself, which has been demolished by the Hitlerites, but in the suburb of Zalineinoie. Not a single building was left standing in Sovietskaya, Kooperativnaya and other principal streets. . . .

From the first day of their occupation the Germans instituted a regime of bloody terror. They first wiped out the families of Communists, Red Army men and Jews, and then proceeded to the massacre of intellectuals, Soviet employees and workers. The land around Gomel is soaked with the blood of guiltless Soviet citizens. Anti-tank ditches surrounding the town are filled with corpses. Many victims of the brutal outrages of the Germans were buried alive.

On Easter 1943, the Gestapo monsters drove some 100 women and children to Privokzalnaya Square, branded them as "guerrilla accomplices," herded them into a brick-shed and hurled smoke-pots among them. Agonized cries resounded from the shed for an hour, then silence fell. Children who had managed to creep through the loft to the roof were run through with bayonets and thrown back to their tortured mothers.

On the order of the Hitlerite commissioner in Byelorussia, Wilhelm Kube, a so-called "committee of peace and order" was set up in Gomel. At first the "committee" engaged in mass shootings of townsfolk, then it transferred its activities to neighboring villages. The "committee" scattered handbills demanding assistance from the peasants in the struggle against the guerrillas. When this design fell through, the Germans destroyed one village after another. The villages of Krynki and Liski, which numbered about 1,000 farmsteads each, and many others, were burned down with their inhabitants. The farmers were locked in barns, petrol poured over the walls, and the barns set on fire. Those who crept out of the fire were machine gunned. . . .

This factual, circumstantial report is the more impressive because of its restrained tone; it is only one, and by no means the most gruesome, of hundreds of similar accounts which I have seen. Nor is it possible to dismiss such stories as "atrocities propaganda," because their general content and many of the most appalling details have been confirmed in thousands of similar reports received from Poland, France, Yugoslavia, Norway, and other occupied countries.

These unspeakable atrocities which the Nazi occupation authorities have coldbloodedly committed against the Rus-



sian civilian population have aroused a national wrath and hatred such as Russia never before has known in her millenary history. Maurice Hindus, Eve Curie, and other authors who have recently returned from the Russian fronts all attest to the depth and fierceness of this sentiment.

In contrast with the purely ideological hostility toward Nazism which prevailed in Russia before the war, the present hatred of Hitler and his hordes is something live, something real, something terrifying. Old men and young, women and children, the worker, the peasant, the employee ~~all~~ now have really learned to hate.

It is all the more remarkable therefore that Stalin and his government have kept a completely cool head in their attitude toward Germany. While they have denounced the Nazi atrocities in the strongest possible terms, they always make a point of laying the blame on the "Hitlerites" or the "German Fascists"—never on the German people as such. There is not the slightest trace of "Vansittartism" \* in the declared Soviet policy toward Germany.

In his speech of February 23, 1942, Stalin made his stand perfectly clear:

Occasionally the foreign press engages in prattle to the effect that the Red Army's aim is to exterminate the German people and destroy the German State. This is, of course, a stupid lie and a witless slander against the Red Army. The Red Army has not and cannot have such idiotic aims. The Red Army's aims are to drive out the German occupants from our country and liberate Soviet soil from the German Fascist invaders.

It is very likely that the war for the liberation of the Soviet land will result in ousting or destroying Hitler's clique. We should welcome such an outcome. *But it would be ridiculous*

\* Vansittartism: a school of thought, initiated by the Rt. Hon. Lord Vansittart, former British Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which is based on a sweeping condemnation of the German people and decries the distinction between "good Germans" and "bad Germans."

*to identify Hitler's clique with the German people and the German State. History shows that Hitlers come and go, but the German people and the German State remain. [My italics]*

These are strong and unusual words to use on behalf of an enemy country. They show that Stalin has a much deeper understanding of the real issues of this war than have so many of our Western statesmen. After all the provocation and suffering Russia has endured at the hands of the Hitler gang, Stalin still reasons coolly and realistically. He does not identify the Nazi clique with the German people. Hitlers, he says, come and go, but the German people and the German State remain.

To this line of reasoning the Soviet Premier has stuck tenaciously in his subsequent speeches and actions. It provides the clue to the bold and seemingly enigmatic move by which Moscow in midsummer 1943 puzzled and chagrined the Allied world: the formation of the Free Germany Committee.

#### THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF FREE GERMANY

For a better understanding of the recent evolution of Soviet thought and policy in regard to Germany, it is interesting step by step to retrace the events that led up to the formation of the Free Germany Committee and brought it to the fore as a major factor in Soviet politics.

*October 8, 1941:* At the height of the German onslaught toward Moscow—it was the day the city of Orel fell to the invaders—a “First Conference of German prisoners of war, Privates and Non-Commissioned Officers in the Soviet Union” was held in Camp 58, somewhere in Russia. The conference was organized and presided over by the former German Reichstag Deputy Walter Ulbricht who had fled to the Soviet Union after the Nazis’ seizure of power. No officers attended this rally which had many familiar ear-

marks of a Communist Party show, Ulbricht being the principal organizer of the Red underground movement in the Reich.

*May, 1942:* The great winter campaign with its costly retreat from Moscow, and a string of other German setbacks, was over; the Nazi summer offensive toward the Volga had not yet gotten under way. For the first time since the start of the war, the possibility of utter defeat had begun to weigh on German officers' minds.

Under the impact of these events, twenty-two German officers in various prison camps established contact and got together in a "Group of anti-Fascist Officers," apparently without direct connection with the above-mentioned gathering. In a fervent appeal to the German people, the Group warned the Fatherland that it would face inevitable catastrophe unless Hitler was overthrown and an "honorable peace" was sought while there still was time.

In contrast with the doings and utterances of the First Conference, the Officers' Group appears not to have been strictly a Party-line affair. While it could not, of course, be formed without the approval of the Soviet authorities, it spoke and acted in the national interest of Germany rather than for the purpose of a social revolution.

Up to this point, Soviet sponsorship of the prisoners' movement was limited and rather academic. It was the great German disaster at Stalingrad that really started the ball rolling. With hundreds of thousands of disillusioned and disgruntled Nazi prisoners in their hands, the Russians could play for high stakes, and did. These prisoners could be used as pawns not only in the armed contest with Germany but also in a possible future clash of interests between Moscow and its partners in Washington and London.

*January, 1943:* A delegation of three leading members of

the Group of anti-Fascist Officers arrived at the Stalingrad front to interview and contact those among the thousands of dejected prisoners who were already manifesting anti-Nazi feelings. With them went a group of former German Reichstag members and intellectuals who had long lived in Moscow and were either Communist Party members or fellow-travelers.

The two delegations, acting as one, aimed high when they circulated among the captive officers of the Sixth Army an appeal to join the ranks of anti-Fascist Germans in Russia. What they originally had in mind was nothing less than to win Field Marshal Friedrich von Paulus himself over to their side, along with his top-ranking generals.

The Marshal refused. Not that he was particularly fond of Hitler whose whimsical instructions had doomed the Sixth Army, but his rigid Prussian military traditions ruled out any form of cooperation with the enemy. Besides, von Paulus was a rabid and irreconcilable enemy of Bolshevism. He was one of those comparatively few top-ranking German generals who preferred to come to terms with the Western Powers at almost any price, rather than make a pact with the Kremlin. The generals of his suite also refused at the time to listen to the siren songs of the anti-Fascist Officers' Group.

*July 12, 1943:* On that date, one of the most strangely assorted companies that ever banded together for a common political purpose assembled in a Moscow conference hall, to found the "National Committee of Free Germany."

There were thirty-four delegates. Most of the older men, with hard, dogged faces, were political exiles who had not set foot on German soil in ten years or more. These were, without exception, either members of the Communist Party, or well-known fellow-travelers.

Five of them were former members of the Reichstag, and

top functionaries of the German Communist Party: Wilhelm Pieck of Berlin, one of the original founders of the party; Walter Ulbricht, also of Berlin, mentioned above; Wilhelm Florin, Deputy from the Ruhr district; Erwin Hoernle of Stuttgart; and the women's leader, Martha Arendsee of Berlin. Other party functionaries present included the member of the Prussian Diet, Gustav Sobotka from the Ruhr; the trade-union official, Anton Ackermann of Chemnitz; and the Communist youth leader, Hans Mahle of Hamburg.

These were the party wheelhorses, whose names once loomed large in the post-war history of Germany and in the annals of the Communist International. But no less important were the names of authors, poets, and playwrights, representing the cream of Germany's radical intelligentsia, who also attended the meeting: Erich Weinert, hard-hitting satirist and a veteran of World War I; Johannes R. Becher of Munich, revolutionary mysticist and one-time editor of the *Rote Fahne*, central organ of the German Communist Party; Willi Bredel of Hamburg, author and journalist, who spent thirteen months in a concentration camp; Dr. Friedrich Wolf, physician and playwright.

In sharp contrast with this middle-aged and revolutionary group, the rest of the delegates were mostly young men with a nationalist background, and all of them were prisoners of war. Quite a few of them had been members of the Nazi Party, or had been reared in the Hitler Youth and in the stormtroops; most of the others were professional soldiers.

Of these, eleven wore the uniforms of Wehrmacht officers. Their numbers included three majors and two captains; two of the captive officers, Captain Ernst Hadermann—one of the leaders of the original "Group of anti-Fascist Officers"—and First Lieutenant Fritz Ruecker, had been university

professors before they were pressed into uniform. One of the delegates, First Lieutenant Hans Frankenfeld, attended the meeting only three days after he had voluntarily crossed into the Russian lines.

Among the captive officers were two young men whose names contrasted oddly with the revolutionary background and setting of this meeting: Count Heinrich von Einsiedel, twenty-one, scion of a Saxon Junker family dating back to the twelfth century, and a great-grandson of Bismarck; and Bernt von Kügelgen, twenty-eight, son of a well-known editor and publisher, Paul Siegwart Konstantin von Kügelgen, who for many years had been a Nazi official. As a matter of curiosity, I might mention that Lieutenant Bernt von Kügelgen was born in St. Petersburg, where his father for ten years had published the *St. Petersburger Zeitung*, exactly one day before the last war between Germany and Russia broke out.

After two days of conferences and debates, the meeting resulted in the adoption of a common platform and the election of an executive committee composed of Erich Weinert, president, Major Karl Hetz, an engineer from Königsberg, first vice-president, and Count von Einsiedel, second vice-president. A manifesto then was drafted for publication in the German-language weekly *Freies Deutschland*, which was to be the official organ of the "National Committee of Free Germany."

At first, the rally and the manifesto attracted little attention abroad. The world had grown skeptical, and even a little suspicious, of the various "Free German" movements that had sprung up at intervals, now in this, now in that foreign capital.

It was not until July 21 that the extraordinary political import of the Moscow undertaking exploded like a de-

layed-action bomb among the diplomats and foreign correspondents accredited to the Soviet capital. For on that day, *Pravda*, the leading Moscow daily, deliberately called attention to the Free Germans' doings in the most emphatic and provocative manner.

Devoting the full length and breadth of one of its four pages to the story, *Pravda* printed a facsimile of the manifesto in German, along with the thirty-four signatures, and ran a full-length translation of the text.

On August 1, *Pravda* reverted to the subject in a two-column, front-page editorial which said among other things: "We think the Free Germany Committee will play an even more useful role in overthrowing the Hitlerite regime and withdrawing Germany from the war to peace than was played with regard to Italy by the committee of 'Free Italians,' founded in London long ago. . . ."

At this point, no one even vaguely conversant with the ways of the Kremlin could doubt any longer that the formation of the Free Germany Committee represented a major development in Soviet foreign policy. For, not only is it evident that no political manifestation is possible in Russia today without at least the tacit backing of the Soviet government, but the treatment given the matter by *Pravda* had the familiar ring of a major Soviet propaganda offensive. It was plain beyond question that the wide publicity given in Moscow to the program of the Free Germany Committee was designed to impress on the world that this was no private undertaking without consequence, but was in effect a declaration of Soviet policy with regard to a defeated Germany.

This realization sent the foreign diplomats and observers in Moscow back to their copies of the Free German manifesto which now got as zealous readings as once had been

reserved to *Mein Kampf*, and other similarly esoteric documents of Nazism.

In Washington and London too, the political analysts spent sleepless nights poring over the Free German manifesto. They anatomized every sentence, probed every dubious expression, and searched for hidden meanings between the lines. Here are the salient passages of the manifesto as published in the *New York Times* of August 1, 1943:

Germans! Events demand of us an immediate solution. The National Committee of Free Germany has been organized at a time of mortal danger hanging over our country and threatening its very existence. . . .

The National Committee has the right, and is obliged in this hour, to speak on behalf of the German people, to speak clearly and firmly, as the gravity of the present moment demands.

Look and see what is taking place on the fronts. The defeats of the last seven months are unparalleled in the history of Germany—Stalingrad, the Don, the Caucasus, Libya and Tunisia. Full responsibility for these defeats rests with Hitler. And none the less he still continues to remain at the head of the army and state. . . .

*The troops of England and America are at the gates of Europe.* The day is drawing nigh when blows will rain down on Germany simultaneously from all skies. The weakened German army, pressed back by superior enemy forces, will not be able to hold out much longer. The hour of its collapse is approaching. . . .

Hitler prepared for this predatory war years in advance without consulting the will of the people. Hitler led Germany to political isolation. He has irresponsibly challenged the three greatest world powers with the result that they have united for ruthless struggle against Hitlerism. . . . Never has a foreign foe hurled us Germans into such a gulf of disaster as has Hitler. The facts implacably show that the war is lost. . . .

*But Germany must not die!* To be or not to be—such is the question today facing our country. If the German people continue resignedly and submissively to allow themselves to be led to their doom, not only will their forces be sapped and



dwindled with every passing day of the war, but also their guilt will increase.

Hitler then will be overthrown only by the force of the coalition armies. But this will signify the end of our national independence and of our state existence, the dismemberment of our fatherland. And we shall have only ourselves to blame afterward.

*If the German people in good time are courageous enough and prove in deed that they want to be a free people and that they are determined to free Germany from Hitler, they will then win the right to decide their fate themselves, and other nations will take them into consideration. This is the only way of saving the very existence, freedom and honor of the German nation.*

The German people need immediate peace and long for it. *But nobody will conclude peace with Hitler. Nor for that matter will anybody conduct negotiations with him. Hence the formation of a genuine national German Government is the most urgent task of our people. Only such a government will enjoy the confidence of the people and their former enemies. Only such a government can bring peace.*

This government must be strong and possess the necessary power to render harmless the enemies of the people—Hitler, his patrons and satellites. It must resolutely put an end to terror and corruption, establish firm order and represent Germany with dignity to the outside world.

This government can be established only as the outcome of a liberation struggle of all sections of the German people. It will support itself on the fighting groups that will unite to overthrow Hitler. *There are forces in the army that are loyal to the country, and the people must play a decisive role.*

*This government will immediately cease military operations, will recall the German troops to the Reich's frontiers and embark on peace negotiations, renouncing all conquests. In this manner it will attain peace and once again place Germany on an equal footing with other nations.*

Only such a government will afford the German people the opportunity to express their will in conditions of peace for sovereign solution of the question of a state system.

*This means a strong democratic power that will have nothing in common with the helpless Weimar regime; a democracy that*

will be implacable, that will ruthlessly suppress any attempt at new plots against the rights of free people or against European peace.

It means the annulment of all laws based on national and racial hatred; of all orders of the Hitlerite regime that degrade our people; the annulment of all measures of the Hitlerite authorities directed against freedom and human dignity.

It means the restoration and extension of the political rights and social gains of the working people: freedom of speech, press, assembly, conscience and religious beliefs. It means the freedom of economy, trade and handicraft; the guaranteed right to labor and to lawfully acquired property. . . .

It means the just, inexorable trial of those responsible for the war, of its instigators and their ringleaders, and accomplices behind the scenes, of those who have hurled Germany into an abyss and branded her with shame. *But at the same time it means amnesty for all Hitler adherents who in good time will renounce him and join the movement for a free Germany.* . . .

German soldiers and officers on all fronts: You have weapons in your hands. Hold on to them! Under the leadership of those commanders who recognize their responsibility and move together with you against Hitler, boldly clear yourself the path leading your country to peace. . . .

Our history sets us a great example. One hundred and thirty years ago, when German troops still stood on Russian soil as enemies, it was precisely from Russia that the finest sons of the Germans—von Stein, Arndt, Clausewitz, York and others,—appealed to the conscience of the German people over the heads of their traitors, the German rulers, and called upon them to wage a liberation war. Like them, we will give all our strength, and if need be our very life, to rally our people for the struggle for freedom and to hasten the overthrow of Hitler. . . .

For people and Fatherland! Against Hitler and his criminal war! For immediate peace! For the salvation of the German people! For a free and independent Germany! [My italics]

In the welter of conflicting interpretations and erratic speculation produced by this remarkable document, there is one theory which we can dismiss forthwith with a shrug:

that of the reactionaries who believe that anything which comes from Moscow must be a plan to Bolshevize Europe.

Actually Stalin, as I have indicated above, does not want to Bolshevize Europe and least of all Germany. He is still very much the man of "Socialism in one country," which does not, of course, mean that he would oppose the formation of Soviet regimes in other countries, but does mean that all his mind and heart are with Russia and that he desires above all a stable Europe in which the Soviet Union can rebuild her devastated areas and reach a new prosperity. His interest if any, in a world revolution is secondary and platonic.

In the case of Germany, in particular, Stalin would be anything but gratified by a Communist revolution, at least for the time being. He is fully aware that it will take many years, perhaps many decades, to eradicate from the minds of the German people the mad dream of world hegemony which first the Kaiser and then Hitler have implanted there. In any association with a Communist Germany, Russia—yes, even a victorious Russia—would run a great risk of becoming the junior partner, of losing the peace to her former enemy. This is so because of the extraordinary dynamism of the German people, their talent of organization, and their immoderate will to power. All that is needed to turn Germany for the third time into a world menace is a new impulse and vehicle such as the Marxian doctrine would represent.

Stalin, being a wise man, and a great realist, knows this and has made his plans accordingly. The Germany he wants to see arise out of the ashes of this war is to be not a Soviet state, but something entirely new and different. It is to be—and I quote from the manifesto, every word of which has surely been read and approved by Stalin himself—"a strong,

democratic power . . . a democracy that will be implacable." Indeed, the manifesto nowhere so much as hints at the establishment of a Soviet regime in Germany. It explicitly recognizes the right lawfully to acquire property and forecasts free and general elections for the "sovereign solution of the question of a state system."

As a matter of fact, the Germany envisioned in this manifesto is of a kind that the entire world would be happy to see materialize: a Germany peaceful, cooperative, progressive. There is only one hitch in this pleasant picture. The National Committee of Free Germany, and therefore by implication the Soviet government, is clearly committed to salvaging the German Army—the same army that is now at death grips with the Soviet forces!

It was indeed a remarkable performance for old revolutionists and Communist Party whips like Pieck, Ulbricht, Hoernle, and Florin, to affix their signatures to a manifesto calling on German soldiers *not* to turn their rifles against their own officers, but to "hold on to them under the leadership of those commanders who recognize their responsibility."

Later declarations of the Committee went even further in their repudiation of the revolutionary ways of 1918. In August, 1943, Major Herbert Soesslein, a leading member of the Committee, wrote in *Freies Deutschland*: "We are opposed to fomenting demoralization in the *Wehrmacht*. We do not intend to incite the soldiers to abandon their arms and retreat in disorder. . . . We must avert at all costs any repetition of the events of 1918. We must avoid all anarchy and undisciplined behavior. . . . Our slogan is ~~reconstruction, not~~ destruction."

In the same article, Major Soesslein described the German Army—which the Western democracies have vowed to destroy so utterly that it will never rise again!—as "a

valuable instrument which must be preserved at any cost and in full," adding that "construction of a strong democracy will require the support of a strongly welded army led by officers who realize their responsibilities."

The Moscow dispatch to the *Christian Science Monitor* (August 11, 1943), from which these citations are taken, provided another, most revealing sidelight on the character of the Free Germany Committee. Its organ, *Freies Deutschland*, carries on its masthead a German flag. Not the red banner of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg; not the black, red, and gold flag of the Weimar Republic; no—the red, white, and black of Imperial Germany, the beloved symbol of Alfred Hugenberg, the *Stahlhelm*, the Reichswehr, and the Junkers!

This, more than anything else, would seem to indicate that, despite the Moscow locale and the presence in the Committee of Communist Party whips and radical writers, it is the nationalist-minded officers who really run the show. If it is a strange sight to see Walter Ulbricht preach order and discipline to war-weary German soldiers, it is an even more extraordinary one to read the outpourings of an Erich Weinert or Johannes R. Becher under the red, white, and black banner that hitherto has been the symbol of reaction in Germany.

But of course, the manifesto tells us explicitly that there will be no restoration of the "helpless Weimar regime." The Free Germans of Moscow, in their search for proper patron saints and symbols, go further back in the Reich's history. Having conjured up the spirits of von Stein, Arndt, Clausewitz, and York—none of them suspected of being a precursor of Bolshevism—they chance upon a real find: Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor.

Whether it was merely because a Soviet airman's bullets dumped the Chancellor's great-grandson into their midst,

or Stalin really envisages a Germany based on the ideas and ideals of 1871, Bismarck and his flag have become the symbols of the Free Germany Committee.

In point of fact, even before the Committee was launched, Soviet airplanes showered over the German lines millions of leaflets with a picture of Count von Einsiedel in the Luftwaffe uniform in which he was shot down over Stalingrad in August, 1942. The picture shows Einsiedel holding in his hands a poster on which a towering, masterful Bismarck sternly and contemptuously points at a little Hitler in the lower right-hand corner, with the legend, "This man is leading Germany toward catastrophe."

The leaflet represents Einsiedel as saying: "A war of Germany against Russia is stupid and without chance [of success]. This my great-grandfather, Otto von Bismarck, said again and again, and every soldier must daily become more convinced of its truth."

It is this Bismarckian touch that more than anything else gives the Western democracies plenty to think about the Moscow Committee. The Russians apparently are pursuing a *(Rückversicherungspolitik)* of their own, and it is not too difficult to guess against whom they are thus reinsuring themselves.

On the other hand, it is precisely this nationalist and on the whole conservative spirit which makes the program of the Free Germany Committee palatable to the German Army chiefs. Why should not a German general shake hands with men who publicly revere Bismarck, and Arndt, and Clausewitz, even though some of them once used to regard Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels as their patron saints?

As a matter of fact, it did not take long before at least some of the generals among the 600,000 or so German prisoners in Soviet Russia saw the point and changed their minds about joining the Free Germany Committee. Natu-

rally, the march of military events had a great deal to do with this change of heart.

The Committee was formed at a time when the much-touted German summer offensive of 1943 had ended in miserable failure at Kursk, and the great counter-offensive of the Red Army was just getting under way. German disillusionment and anger at the clearly demonstrated military ineptitude of the once god-like Führer ran high, and nowhere did it run higher than among the captive officers in Russia. But the Stalingrad generals still were holding out against the appeals of the Free Germany Committee, hoping against hope that the tide would turn.

Instead, the Red Army plunged irresistibly forward, capturing Orel, Belgorod, Kharkov, Stalino, Bryansk. With every triumph of Soviet arms, the Sixth Army generals' loyalty to the Führer grew weaker and by mid-September they had surrendered unconditionally to the advances of the Free Germany Committee.

The surrender occurred at a new officers' convention in Moscow, on September 11. More than a hundred German officers, including five generals and many colonels, attended the meeting which ended with the formation of a "Union of German Officers," attached to the Free Germany Committee.

The newcomers were nearly all survivors of the Sixth Army lost at Stalingrad. Among them were some of Field Marshal von Paulus' closest associates: Artillery General Walter Kurt von Seidlitz, descendant of an old Silesian Junker family and highest-ranking officer in the group; Lieutenant General Alexander Edler von Daniels; Major Generals Otto Korfes and Martin Lattmann; and—I rubbed my eyes when I read this—a genuine Nazi Party general, S.S. Obergruppenführer (Elite Guard general) Walter Meyer of the Death's Head Division.

Elected Chairman of the new Officers' Union, General von Seidlitz also was made one of the vice-presidents of the Free Germany Committee. The Union explicitly adhered to the above-mentioned manifesto and in an appeal of its own addressed to the German Army urged it to halt the war which "is continuing exclusively in the interest of Hitler and his regime." The appeal also called for "a government which would enjoy the confidence of the people."

Again, it goes without saying that the officers' convention could not have been held without the explicit permission and approval of the Soviet government. In no country in the world do prisoners of war freely travel from their camps to the national capital, found unions, and issue manifestoes, and least of all could they do so in the strictly regimented Soviet Union. Hence the Moscow "Union of German Officers," like the "National Committee of Free Germany" cannot possibly be regarded as private undertakings, but must be viewed as instruments and manifestations of Soviet foreign policy.

#### A SOFT PEACE FOR GERMANY?

All this, I admit, must be rather confusing, if not outright baffling, to the average American reader who is unfamiliar with the intricacies of European politics and does not appreciate the bold imagination and the peculiar sense of humor underlying Stalin's foreign policy.

Many and grave questions suggest themselves to the wondering spectator: What is Stalin up to now? Is he headed for another pact with Hitler? Or, barring such a contingency, is Russia prepared to conclude a separate peace with a non-Nazi Germany?

In this event, will Germany get a soft peace? Are the Russians going to let bygones be bygones and shake hands



with the cruel enemy who inflicted so much suffering on them?

Are the Russians about to desert their allies, or maybe even to turn upon them?

We can safely dismiss, I think, the eventuality of a new Hitler-Stalin pact on the model of that concluded in August, 1939. In the first place, that pact never for one moment was based on real friendship between the two partners. It was an act of cold opportunism, of "political expediency," each side knowing full well that the other was going to cut his throat at the first opportunity.

Secondly, Stalin, who does not often commit himself in advance—for instance, he has never explicitly adhered to the Casablanca formula of Unconditional Surrender—has made it unmistakably clear that he is out to destroy Hitler and all he stands for.

Indeed, in his great address to the Moscow Soviet on Nov. 6, 1942, Stalin said: "It is not our aim to destroy Germany, for it is impossible to destroy Germany, . . . but the Hitlerite state can and should be destroyed, and our first task, in fact, is to destroy the Hitlerite state and its inspirers. . . . It is not our aim to destroy all military forces in Germany, for every literate person will understand that this is not only impossible, . . . *but it is also inadvisable from the point of view of the future.* But Hitler's army can and should be destroyed. . . . Our second task is, in fact, to destroy Hitler's army and its leaders. . . . Our third task is to destroy the hated New Order in Europe and to punish its builders. . . ." [My italics]

This speech, made with poise and calm confidence at the most critical moment in Russia's war, with the German Army on the banks of the Volga and Stalingrad apparently doomed, also will help to answer a few of the other questions listed above.

Barring, then, the possibility of a new pact, or even of peace, with Hitler, is there a chance that the Russians will make a separate peace with a chastised Germany, purged of Hitler and his clique?

Before the Moscow Conference, the answer was yes. There can be little doubt that the formation of the Free Germany Committee, in addition to being an instrument of political warfare, constituted an underhand Russian bid for a separate peace and possibly for a subsequent alliance with Germany.

The moment, however, Russia and her allies got together at the Moscow parley, the outlook for a separate peace faded. In any event, there is little chance that the peace a defeated Germany can get from the Russians will be a soft peace. On more than one occasion, the Soviet press has already made guarded, but none the less telling, references to the stupendous bill Germany may expect to get from Russia when the war is over and the damage is counted.

The reparations which Russia can be expected to ask of Germany will mainly consist in manpower to be supplied for the rehabilitation of devastated areas, as Raymond Moley pointed out in his column in *Newsweek* (September 20, 1943).

Mr. Moley quotes a prominent Soviet economist, Professor Eugene Varga of the "Russian Institute of World Economics," as suggesting that Russia might settle for something like 10,000,000 skilled workers doing ten years of reconstruction labor in the Soviet Union, at Germany's expense. These 100,000,000 labor-years, figures Mr. Moley, would amount in money to something like \$50,000,000,000 or, in purchasing power, to about seventy percent more than was claimed after the last war. In addition, Germany, according to Professor Varga's suggestion, would have to

pay as yet unspecified amounts in money, livestock, and machinery.

About the same time, a well-known Soviet journalist, David Zaslavsky, writing in the army newspaper *Red Star*, warned the Germans against wantonly increasing their debit account: "When our turn comes, we will not destroy the German towns and villages. We are not savages. Our legitimate vengeance will not interfere with reparations. We shall be needing a lot of brick, glass and iron. Our experts will draw up an exact account which will include our destroyed buildings and burned cottages. Germany will pay in full, and only the fools and scoundrels in Germany can rejoice in the growing amount." (Quoted from the *New York Daily Worker*, September 25, 1943.)

Germany thus cannot count on getting a soft peace from Russia; she will have to pay in full for the damage deliberately and wickedly done. But even so it appears that Russia may think of offering her defeated enemy far more generous terms than those implied in the Allied formula of Unconditional Surrender.

That much can be inferred not only from the manifesto of the Free Germany Committee which virtually guarantees the Reich's territorial integrity and independence, after it has disgorged the stolen lands, but also from various Moscow broadcasts beamed to Germany in recent months. For instance, on September 9, 1943,—the day after the Italian surrender—a spokesman of the Committee told the German people over the Moscow radio that it could obtain a "just peace" that would "not curtail the vital rights of our German nation," after having cleansed its house of the Nazi pest.

Whether or not these tentative moves will lead to a separate peace between Russia and Germany cannot be forecast as this is written. The outcome of this subtle game will de-

pend in the main on two as yet unknown factors. One is the ability of the Nazi regime to retain control in the face of an almost certain attempt by the Wehrmacht to save its own skins by tossing Hitler, Himmler, and company to the Red wolves. The other is an Allied decision to come to terms with Russia at almost any price. If an agreement satisfactory to Russia is reached within the next few months, the Kremlin probably will not hesitate to discard the Free Germany Committee which then will have lost its political usefulness.

At the present juncture, the Committee serves both the political and the military ends of the Russians. Its military value is immediate and obvious. All its activities are directed toward sapping Nazi morale and bringing about a complete withdrawal of German forces from the Russian front. Three times a day its subversive appeals go out over the Moscow radio; day and night they are dinned into the ears of the German soldiers by loudspeakers blaring across the fighting lines. Millions of leaflets and pamphlets issued by the Committee have been dropped from Soviet airplanes amidst the retreating Nazi troops.

Politically, the Russians are using the Committee much in the same manner as the Nazis used Vichy and the Allies are using Badoglio and his little king. The Committee may become the nucleus of a new German government subservient to Soviet demands, or it may simply be a pawn in the inter-Allied tug-of-war for preponderance in Europe.

Stalin, we must realize, is a clever diplomat as well as a great captain. He thinks and plans in terms of long-range strategy. While he was making his pact with Hitler, Stalin's mind was set on the coming, inevitable war with Germany. Now that he is allied to the Western democracies, and administering to the Reich its greatest defeat in history, the

Soviet leader keeps his eye on the as yet remote possibility of a future conflict with the West.

This is not to say that Stalin relishes the prospect of a third world war any more than we do. He did not want to fight Hitler, if he could help it, and much less does he want to fight the Western powers. But he is not the man to leave his gun in the cloakroom as he sits down to talk things over with business friends. The gun is there, squarely on the table.

Or rather, he has two guns placed before him as he talks. One is the victorious, the irresistible Red Army. The other is the Free Germany Committee. It is loaded with explosive possibilities.

Consider again the time when the Committee was founded. It was in July, 1943, on the eve of the great Soviet summer offensive. And it also was at a time when Russia's relations with her Western allies, following the Russo-Polish breach and other incidents, were rapidly cooling off. On July 28, Moscow announced the recall of the tested diplomat who for ten years had represented Russia in London, Ambassador Ivan M. Maisky; a few weeks later, Maisky's Washington counterpart, Maxim M. Litvinov, was also recalled. Short of a diplomatic rupture, the Kremlin could not possibly have manifested its displeasure with Britain and America in a more spectacular way than by this simultaneous withdrawal of the two top diplomats known the world over as fervent exponents of a pro-Western Russian policy.

Moscow's annoyance may have been partly due to the Allies' continued failure to set up a real second front, but in even greater degree it sprang from a basic disagreement over the future of Europe at a time when the end of the war was coming within sight.

Hence the formation of the Free Germany Committee which carried an implicit threat to the Western powers that Russia might at any time reverse her alliances and completely upset the Anglo-American appletart.

A totally defeated, disorganized, and disintegrating Germany would be of little value to Russia in her contest of power with Britain and America. A Germany beaten and weakened, but still a power, with the Wehrmacht in control and the Nazis out, might become a first-rate bargaining asset for its conqueror—Russia.

That is why Stalin, in his speech of November 6, 1942, had said: "It is not our aim to destroy all military forces in Germany, for every literate person will understand that this is . . . inadvisable from the point of view of the future"; and why the Free Germany Committee speaking of the German Army, echoed: "a valuable instrument that must be preserved at any cost and in full."

The meaning of all this is clear to those who are not in the habit of closing their eyes and ears to unpleasant realities: Stalin is playing for high stakes. He knows what he wants in Europe, and he means to get it, even if necessary at the price of allying himself with a new Wehrmacht-Germany, purged of Hitler and his Nazi clique.

As to the Germans, they know that to play Russia's game is the only alternative to the hated Unconditional Surrender. In this plight, the memory of the first German-Soviet deal at the Treaty of Rapallo, April 16, 1922, will come to the mind of many a German general, perhaps many a German industrialist as well. . . .

Is there no way, then, of averting such a fateful turn of events? There is. It is the way of making large, painful, drastic concessions to Russia. It is the way of giving her most, if not all, of what she wants. There is no other way.

Blackmail? Of course,—but blackmail has been, since

time immemorial, an accepted practice of diplomacy. Besides, Russia's territorial claims, I hope to show in the following, are on the whole neither extravagant, nor unjustified.

If the Russians, then, use pressure—and the Free Germany Committee will be, as long as it lasts, an instrument of pressure—to obtain their allies' consent to what they consider legitimate demands, they do no worse than other great powers, including this country and Britain, have done in the past. It is not so much the means that count but the purpose. As long as a country's aims are defensible, its methods of achieving them must be judged with some leniency. For we have not yet reached in international relations anything like the legal and moral standards now commonly accepted in the relationship between individuals, or between the individual and the state.

This realization appears to have largely influenced the recent Moscow conference of the American, British and Russian Foreign Secretaries (October 19 to November 1, 1943) at which the Soviet point of view scored significant victories. In view of the "tremendous success" of this conference, which led to the adoption of a common policy toward Germany, it is reasonable to expect that the Free Germany Committee, having fulfilled one of its two major purposes, will recede into the background; it may continue, though, to serve as an instrument for the disintegration of the Nazi armies. Perhaps also it may come to play again a major role in the settlement of the one problem on which the Allies still are poles apart—or should I say Poles apart, with a capital P?

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## CHAPTER IV

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# Not Yet Is Poland Lost

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NEXT to the fate of Germany, the most controversial issue at stake between Russia and her allies is the future size and status of Poland. It is an issue that has been beclouded almost beyond hope by ignorance of the facts and partisan thinking.

For a sound approach to this problem it is necessary to go back through the years of war to the origins of the Polish Republic, born in the throes of another great war. While giving full credit for the heroism and martyrdom of the Polish people, we should keep our heads cool and our minds clear when it comes to defining Poland's rightful place in Europe.

Let us begin with Poland's contribution to the war against the common enemy. This contribution has been, paradoxically, much greater since the close of, than during, the twenty-eight-day campaign in which Hitler's panzers smashed the Poland of Marshal Edward Smigly-Rydz and Colonel Josef Beck, with the Red Army administering the *coup de grâce*.

By nightfall, September 28, 1939, the Polish state created at Versailles had ceased to exist. Warsaw's gallant resistance had collapsed in the morning. In the afternoon, the Nazi Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and the Soviet Premier Vyacheslav M. Molotov signed the Křemlin pact



that was to obliterate Poland from the map "for all times." The fourth partition of that unhappy country was a fact.

But even on that fateful day, Polish patriots all over the world staunchly refused to believe that history's doom this time might be final. Tenderly or desperately, in tears or in mute wrath, they clung to the sacred promise of their national anthem: "*Jeszcze Polska nie zginela*"—"Not Yet Is Poland Lost."

Poland stayed in the fight. Under the leadership of General Wladyslaw Sikorski, a new Polish Army, 100,000 strong, was formed in France. It fought valiantly at Narvik, and in Flanders. When French resistance collapsed and the British forces were evacuated from the continent, General Sikorski succeeded in getting the bulk of his forces to England. There, for the third time, a Polish Army was organized, constantly reinforced by individuals who managed to escape from the homeland, or were recruited among Polish residents abroad.

This Polish force in Britain today constitutes an army corps, including an armored division, a rifle brigade, parachute troops, and other units. In the air, its present strength is far greater than it ever was at home. Numbering some 12,000 battle-tested flyers, the Polish Air Force is reputed to rank fourth among the air forces of the United Nations. It gave a magnificent account of itself in the Battle of Britain and has participated in many raids on Germany. Up to November, 1943, the Polish air squadrons in Britain had destroyed 608 enemy aircraft, sunk seven U-boats, and dropped more than 6,000 tons of bombs on targets in Germany and German-occupied territories. The small Polish navy too continued to fight gallantly and successfully alongside the British and American navies.

A vast additional reservoir of Polish military strength was opened up through the Nazi attack on Soviet Russia in

June, 1941. When the Red Army invaded Eastern Poland in September, 1939, it took large numbers of prisoners, both military and political. According to Polish estimates, a total of 1,500,000 persons, mostly civilians, were taken to concentration camps in the U.S.S.R., but this figure is probably exaggerated. Of military personnel, 181,000 fell into the hands of the Red Army, according to a report published on September 17, 1940 in *Red Star*. Now, these prisoners were set free by the Soviet authorities to fight again—as allies of their former enemies.

In the beginning, it looked like a beautiful friendship. Red Army men and Polish ex-prisoners fraternized publicly. In Moscow restaurants the orchestras played Poland's national anthem. Polish contingents marching through the streets of Russian cities were wildly cheered by the populace.

On July 30, 1941, the Polish Premier General Sikorski and the Soviet Ambassador in London, Ivan Maisky, signed an agreement that formally ended the state of war existing between Poland and the U.S.S.R. and joined them in a military alliance.

Supplementing this treaty, the two governments concluded on August 14 a military agreement which regulated in detail the formation, equipment, and use of a new Polish Army to be recruited among the former prisoners of war and Polish civilians in the U.S.S.R.

Under the terms of this accord, the strength of the new Polish Army to be raised within the Soviet Union was fixed at 30,000 men; subsequently the figure was expanded twice and by February, 1942, an effective strength of 73,415 men had been attained.

To finance the recruiting, training, and equipment of this army, the Soviet government granted to the Polish government-in-exile a loan without interest in the amount

of 65,000,000 rubles which, on January 1, 1942, was raised to 300,000,000 rubles.\* The Soviet authorities also provided the Poles with barracks, training grounds, military schools, medical supplies and institutions, and food rations corresponding to those of the Red Army. Uniforms, arms, and other equipment were largely supplied by Britain and the United States, either directly to the Polish military authorities or by way of Lend-Lease extended to Russia.

As commander-in-chief of this army General Sikorski appointed one of Poland's best officers, General Wladyslaw Anders, a veteran of many campaigns. An ardent nationalist, General Anders hated the Russians as much as the Germans. He had twice fought against the Red Army, in the war of 1918-1920 and again in September, 1939. He was made a prisoner and spent nearly two years in Soviet concentration camps.

On August 4, 1941, so the story goes, the Soviet Chief of Police L. P. Beria personally released the Polish general from captivity with the words: "General Anders, you are free. Your country is our ally and you are our honored guest." (*Newsweek*, May 4, 1942.) Thus literally overnight the dejected prisoner became a notable, the commander-in-chief of an allied army.

Once they had buried the hatchet, the Soviets treated General Anders with courtesy and distinction. They placed a comfortable five-room flat, an automobile, and servants at his disposal. He was given every facility for the accomplishment of his mission. And, in General Anders' own words, Stalin gave him the promise that Polish troops would have "the honor of being first to set foot on Polish soil when it is reconquered."

At the time when the Polish-Russian agreement was

\* Statement by Vice-Commissar Andrei Vyshinsky, made to the representatives of the foreign press in Moscow on May 6, 1943.

made, it was understood that the Poles should be ready for battle by October 1, 1941. When that date was reached, not a single Polish soldier went to the Soviet-German front. Month after month went by, and nothing happened. Repeated inquiries by the Soviet military authorities were reported to have been met with subterfuges. All through that fateful winter, the Russians fought alone.

In February, 1942, the Russians inquired again. They had heard that the Polish Fifth Division had completed its training. When was it going to the front? Once more General Anders held back. He stated that he could not send one division into action separately, while the rest of his army still was in training. (Article VII of the Polish-Russian agreement of August 14, 1941 stipulated: "The Polish army units will be moved to the front upon the achievement of full fighting readiness. They will march out as a rule in formations not smaller than one division, and will be used in conformity with the plans of operations of the Supreme Command of the U.S.S.R.") However, he promised that the Polish Army would be ready to go to the front by June 1, 1942.

Meanwhile, the entry of the United States into the war had led to a sharp drop in Lend-Lease deliveries to Russia. As a result, the Soviet government was forced to reduce the food rations for army units not engaged in actual fighting, in order to keep the troops in the field well provisioned. The reduction naturally was also applied to the Polish units.

Thereupon the Polish government-in-exile decided to evacuate its troops from Russia to Iran, which had been jointly occupied by British and Soviet forces. The Russians, who were by now thoroughly disillusioned about General Anders' army, raised no objections and in March a first contingent of 31,488 Polish soldiers left Russia for Iran. By the

end of August, the remaining 44,000 had also been evacuated after the Soviet government had withdrawn its permission for the Sikorski regime to recruit troops in the U.S.S.R.

In Iran, General Anders' army was further reinforced with small contingents of Polish troops drawn from Egypt, Britain, and elsewhere. The famous Carpathian Brigade of some 18,000 veterans of Tobruk and other Libyan battles under the command of General Stanislaw Kopanski also joined it. Now well over 100,000 strong, the "Polish Army in the Middle East" is a powerful fighting force, thoroughly trained and equipped with the most modern British and American arms.

It was last reported in Syria and may already be in action in the Balkans by the time these lines appear in print. But its great dream of spearheading the liberation of Poland from the Germans never came true, through the fault of its own leaders.

#### THE POLISH-RUSSIAN FRONTIER DISPUTE

Why did the Polish-Russian comradeship-in-arms, after such a hopeful start, turn sour and end in open hostility? The principal cause of this unfortunate development which in the past year has poisoned not only Polish-Russian relations, but the whole United Nations atmosphere as well, has been the quarrel over the post-war status of Eastern Poland, or Western Byelorussia and the Western Ukraine, as the same territories are called by the Russians.

The disputed territories—an area of about 78,000 square miles with a peace-time population of 12,775,000 persons—belonged to Poland before the war. They were annexed by the Soviet Union under a highly objectionable agreement with Nazi Germany, which Moscow itself has declared null and void since. The occupation was made by force, against Polish armed resistance. No major Allied power has ever

recognized the incorporation of these territories into the Soviet Union.

All this would seem to make a strong prima-facie case for Poland and against Russia. But we must probe a little further and deeper. How good was Poland's title to the territories in dispute?

Eastern Poland was, like so many other regions in that part of Europe, a hotchpotch of nationalities. One thing is certain, though: the Poles themselves were in a minority in this area. This is not seriously contested by anyone, not excluding the Poles. According to the census of 1931, only 40.4 percent of the population of the seven eastern provinces were of Polish stock; 36.6 percent were Ukrainians; 7.9 percent were Jews; 6.6 percent were White Russians; the rest belonged to diverse nationalities.

An almost identical picture of the racial composition of the territories in dispute was given in the June, 1943 Bulletin of the Polish Pulaski Foundation of Newark, N.J.: "According to the last pre-war census, there were in the half of Poland annexed by Russia:

Poles	5,274,000
Ukrainians and Ruthenians *	4,529,000
White Ruthenians *	1,123,000
Jews	1,109,000
Russians	134,000
Germans	89,000
Lithuanians	84,000
Czechs	35,000

These are the official Polish figures. Other sources, including some that must be presumed to be friendly to the Polish cause, place the percentage of Ukrainians and White

\* The Ruthenians are Ukrainians who were formerly Austrian subjects; "White Ruthenians" is the German name for White Russians.—J.J.

Russians in the disputed provinces at a much higher figure.

For instance, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that in Galicia the linguistic frontier between Poles and Ukrainians runs roughly north and south of Przemyśl and that east of this town 72% of the population was Ukrainian when Poland annexed this territory after the last war. Of Volhynia, the *Britannica* says that it is "almost entirely an Ukrainian country," with a Polish population of only 16.5%; and of Polesie to the north it states: "The bulk of the inhabitants are Ruthenians." These are the provinces,—Galicia east of Przemyśl, Volhynia, Polesie—which in 1939 were annexed to the Soviet Ukraine. Of the two northern provinces which at the same time were annexed to White Russia, the *Britannica* says: "The nationality of the White Russians of Vilna and Nowogrodek is a matter of dispute, those who are Catholics being claimed as Poles."

Again, the *Penguin Political Dictionary* published in London in September, 1940—that is, at a time when British sentiment was by no means friendly toward the Soviet Union—puts the number of White Russians in Eastern Poland at 2,000,000, or more than 15 percent of the total, while the Ukrainian population is figured at 6,000,000, or close to 50 percent. Including the Jews, Russians, Lithuanians, Germans, and other nationalities in this area, the Poles are left in a decided minority. Soviet statistics, which place the Ukrainian population of what was Eastern Poland at 7,000,000, and the Byelorussian (White Russian) percentage correspondingly higher, make the Polish element appear almost negligibly small.

Socially, the Poles were the ruling class in what was one of the most backward and poverty-stricken regions in Europe. Huge latifundia, covering thousands of acres, were in the hands of a few wealthy noblemen, while the masses of the rural population lived in misery. Prince Radziwill, rich-

est and most powerful of all Polish magnates, owned in Volhynia alone more than 85,000 acres of land, that is to say more than the three independent states of Monaco, San Marino, and Liechtenstein put together. And he had many other estates elsewhere.

In the provinces of Lwow, Stanislawow, and Tarnopol in Eastern Galicia there were 379 estates of over 2,500 acres each, some of the richest magnates owning as many as ten of these latifundia at a time. Altogether the Polish gentry possessed some 2,500,000 acres of land in this area.

Similar conditions obtained in northeastern Poland which the Russians now call Western Byelorussia. Here the Polish landowners constituted 0.9 percent of the rural population but held 40.5 percent of all the land.

Many of the landed squires were at the same time shareholders of the all-powerful Ipotech (Mortgage) Bank which in its turn controlled most of the heavy industry of the Lwow and Tarnopol regions and the oilfields of Boryslaw and Drohobycz, while others were directors or managers of these industrial enterprises.

These are facts and figures to keep in mind in passing upon the respective merits of Poland's and Russia's claims to these territories. What we are faced with is both a national and a social problem. It is decidedly unwise therefore to invoke the Atlantic Charter in such a case. The meaning of the Charter cannot and must not be to consolidate or restore the upper-class rule of a national minority over the destitute masses of other nationalities.

Poland's claim to the lost provinces in the east is not much better founded on historical grounds. The fact is that these territories at various times have belonged to either side. But up to the dawn of the twentieth century, the precedence of might over right in settling territorial disputes was not seriously challenged anywhere. Past possession, there-



fore, should no longer be regarded as a valid yardstick in determining the better title to a territory in dispute.

While it is absurd to go back to the eighteenth century when Poland's frontier in the east reached to the Dnieper and beyond, it is well to remember that the eastern boundary of the new Polish state, born of the last war, was as much a product of violence as is the border claimed by the Russians.

Indeed, the Treaty of Versailles fixed Poland's western boundary but wisely left the problem of her eastern frontiers open as the entire region then was torn by civil strife. However, an Allied commission headed by the British Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon made at least an attempt to delineate the ethnical border between Russia and Poland and on December 8, 1919, the famous "Curzon Line" was drawn. It did not have much practical importance in the past, but it cannot be overlooked in the present controversy, the more so since neither Lord Curzon personally, nor his commission were known to be in the least in sympathy with Bolshevism.

Running west of the Pripet Marshes and, over a long stretch, parallel to the Bug River, roughly through the towns of Grodno, Brest-Litovsk, Rawa Ruska, Jaroslaw and Przemyśl, the Curzon Line put Poland's eastern frontier almost exactly where the Soviet-German pact of September 28, 1939, later drew the demarcation line. Only in the north, in the area of Białystok, did the two lines diverge, the Curzon Line running almost due north from Brest-Litovsk to Grodno, whereas the demarcation line bulged westward to the edge of East Prussia and to the Narew River; there was another minor deviation to the south around Przemyśl which the Curzon Line gave to Poland, while the demarcation line included it in the U.S.S.R. The Curzon Line was wholly in keeping with the Fourteen

Points of President Wilson, of which Point 13 stipulated: "An independent Polish State should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by *indisputably Polish populations.*" [My italics]

At the time when the Curzon Line was drawn, the forces of the young Polish Republic under the leadership of Josef Pilsudski were engaged in heavy fighting both in the east and south. They had in fact two wars on their hands, one against the Ukrainians of General Simon Petliura, the other against the Red Army. Hostilities swayed to and fro over wide areas and before long the Curzon Line was utterly stamped out by the boots of marching soldiers.

In the spring of 1920, the Red Army under General Mikhail N. Tukhachevsky drove the Poles back to the very gates of Warsaw, but a few months later a counter-offensive directed by the French General Maxim Weygand reversed the situation and the Reds were pushed far back into Russia.

Exhausted by more than six years of war, revolution, civil war, and foreign intervention, the Russians threw up the sponge. Thus the disputed territories were in Polish hands when the Treaty of Riga (March 18, 1921) put an end to hostilities. They remained with Poland for the next eighteen years as the price of victory and by no other title. "Again," commented the assuredly not pro-Bolshevist *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on the Treaty of Riga, "the Soviet government had paid a heavy price for peace."

In view of these ethnical, social, and historical data, all of which support the Soviet standpoint in the matter, it is hard to understand the outcry against "Red imperialism" which even some people who really ought to know better—for instance, former Ambassador William C. Bullitt—have raised in this country. Any unbiased and fair-minded observer will look to the Curzon Line as the logical basis for

determining the future Polish-Soviet border. It should be the aim of Allied diplomacy to win some concessions for Poland as regards the territory between the Curzon Line and the Soviet-German demarcation line of 1939 where the two lines diverge north of Brest-Litovsk, but it would be neither fair nor wise to ask of the Russians that they should relinquish the Ukrainian and Byelorussian lands east of the Curzon Line.

#### THE GAME OF THE POLISH REACTIONARIES

Among the Poles themselves, the eastern frontier problem, and beyond it the question of future relations with Russia, has caused wide and deep rifts. There is an intransigent right wing that breathes defiance of Russia and would like nothing better than see the Western democracies fight Russia for restoration of the Polish landowners' privileges, and there is a radical left wing that hews close to the Soviet line. In between these two extremes, there are various shades of moderates who strive for a compromise solution.

This cleavage of opinion came into the open the moment the provisional Polish-Russian agreement of July 30, 1941 was signed. By virtue of this treaty, the Russo-German pact of September 28, 1939 was annulled and the fourth partition of Poland thus was formally abrogated. However, no new arrangement was put in its stead and the question of post-war boundaries remained open.

This was not due to oversight. Before signing the treaty, General Sikorski suggested that the Soviet government should recognize Poland's pre-war frontiers, but he met with a flat refusal. The Russians, who only a few weeks earlier had signed an accord with the Czechoslovak National Committee in London recognizing Czechoslovakia's pre-Munich boundaries, were plainly unwilling to commit themselves in a similar manner toward Poland.

The assertion sometimes put forward by Polish propagandists, in an obvious attempt to discredit Russia's good faith, that the problem of Poland's post-war frontiers had been settled by the Sikorski-Maisky agreement in the sense of a return to the 1939 status quo is definitely untrue. There is nothing in the terms of the treaty to substantiate such a claim.

It is also worthy of note that the British government at the time politely declined a Polish suggestion that it should intercede with Moscow in the matter. On July 31, 1941, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden declared that "the British government did not guarantee Poland's pre-war boundaries."

When General Sikorski nevertheless entered into an agreement with Russia, considering that it would not prejudice the eventual settlement of Poland's eastern frontier problem, a crisis broke out in his cabinet. Foreign Minister August Zaleski and two other members of the government, including the minister without portfolio General Kasiemierz Sosnkowski, resigned in protest. Outside the cabinet the opposition to the treaty was even stronger, especially among the thirty-one members of the "Rada Narodowa," or Polish National Council, an advisory body that acts as a sort of interim parliament, although its members are appointed, not elected.

Until his tragic death in an airplane crash at Gibraltar on July 4, 1943, General Sikorski was the leader of the moderate wing of Polish nationalists. Without ever renouncing Poland's claim to the disputed eastern provinces, he strove sincerely for an understanding with Russia and he did not hesitate to fly to Moscow and talk things over with Stalin personally, early in 1942.

Such moderation was not to the taste of the Polish reactionaries, large numbers of whom had descended on Great

Britain and the United States after their favorite government, the politically and militarily inept Smigly-Rydz-Beck regime, had led their country into disaster. Among them are scores of dispossessed landowners, industrialists, and bankers whose loud-mouthed patriotism is little more than a façade hiding the most selfish interests.

These Polish émigrés have an abundance of money. They are solidly ensconced in the Polish National Council, the diplomatic service, even in the government. Many of the Polish associations, information bureaus, and other agencies are influenced by them.

Above all, they control the bulk of the Polish press abroad. In Britain, where there live about 30,000 Poles, no less than twenty-two Polish-language papers are regularly published, nearly all of them being violently anti-Soviet. The most important of these papers is *Mysl Polska*, whose editor, Dr. Tadeusz Belecki, leads the extreme right wing of the Endeks, or National Democrats, the traditional party of landlords and big business.

Even more extremist is *Walka*, a rabidly anti-Russian, and anti-Semite sheet edited by two big landowners, Przetakevicz and Doboszynski. *Walka* is not a conventional newspaper, but a mimeographed "ghost-sheet," which is however widely distributed among Polish officials and military men. Its journalistic excesses have proved so harmful to the cause of the United Nations that the long-suffering British authorities in March, 1943, stepped in, suspending the paper and arresting its editors. However, it was not long before *Walka* was back in circulation, under new management and as elusive as ever.

Here in the United States, the New York *Nowi Swiat*, which is owned and edited by the former Polish Ambassador to Hungary, Colonel Ignacy Matuszewski, follows much the same line as *Mysl Polska* in London. Matuszewski

is a typical representative of the former "colonel's regime" and a close personal friend of Colonel Josef Beck.

It was the unrelenting pressure from these nationalists that caused the Sikorski government to raise the frontier problem in the early spring of 1943 as the Red Army, concluding its great winter offensive, advanced to a point only fifty miles from the old Polish border. In a flurry lest the Red Army settle the border dispute in its own manner, the Belecki-Matuszewski group decided to make a live issue of it—at the most inopportune moment.

Even before this agitation reached its unfortunate climax, General Sikorski, in an attempt to take the wind out of the sails of his opponents, flew to Washington in December, 1942. While he conferred with President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull, the Polish National Council in London passed a resolution formally laying claim to Vilna, Lwow, and generally to all territories acquired under the Treaty of Riga, at the same time staking out wide claims on German territories in the west.

Sikorski yielded against his own better judgment to the clamors of the "nationalists." On February 25, 1943, he issued an official statement asserting Poland's claim to the lost provinces in the most emphatic manner. Taking issue with a Soviet note of January 16, in which it was stated that all residents of the former eastern provinces of Poland annexed to the U.S.S.R. in September 1939 were to be regarded as Soviet citizens, the statement declared: "The Polish government . . . has from the moment of the conclusion of the Polish-Soviet treaty of July 30, 1941, maintained unchangeable the attitude that so far as the question of frontiers between Poland and Soviet Russia is concerned, the status quo previous to Sept. 1, 1939, is in force."

With this "frontier protest" which invoked the principles of the Atlantic Charter in support of the Polish thesis

and hit the "malicious propaganda which accuses Poland of indirect or direct inimical tendencies toward Soviet Russia," the thorny problem was on the carpet. London's and Washington's endeavors to postpone the discussion until after the war had come to naught. Matters were not helped by a strangely bellicose statement which General Sikorski made in a London speech on March 30: "I wish solemnly to state here, and with the greatest emphasis, that if, at the conclusion of the war, our rights are not respected . . . every Pole, irrespective of political or religious creed, will be united to the last man to resist any claims which aim at the sovereignty of our country, from whatever quarter they might be raised."

Spoken in the midst of a furious Polish-Soviet press controversy on the frontier question, these words could only be taken as meaning that Poland after the war against the Axis had been brought to a victorious conclusion, was prepared to fight Russia for recovery of her lost provinces in the east. This was unlike anything Sikorski had said in public before and one would like to think that the words had been put into his mouth by the extremist opposition which he sought in vain to placate. However that may have been, it was a statement that dangerously increased the existing tension between Poland and the U.S.S.R. and did a great deal to bring the crisis to a head.

#### GRIST FOR HITLER'S MILL

The Soviet press has never excelled in the virtue of moderation and when something really rouses its ire, there are spectacular fireworks. Poland's insistence on having her pre-war boundaries recognized at a time when all Allied energies should be directed toward defeating the common enemy, drew some of the bitterest comment ever published in Soviet papers. Here, for the record, are a few excerpts from

a famous diatribe written by the Ukrainian leader Alexander Korneichuk, a member of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian S.S.R. The article appeared first in *Radyanskaya Ukraina*, was reprinted by the Moscow *Pravda*, and eventually was published in the New York *Rusky Golos* of February 22, 1943, under the headline: "*The Polish Squires in London Shall Not Determine the Fate of the Ukraine.*" Wrote Korneichuk:

The Polish gentry daily beat the drum about their rights to our Ukrainian national territory. They have never recognized the Ukrainian people and to this day they refuse to admit the existence of the strong and talented nation of 40,000,000 Ukrainians. . . . They want to create the impression that there is no free Union of Socialist Soviet Republics in which the Ukrainian Republic enjoys equal rights with her sister states. . . .

In these days of hard battle when the Ukrainian nation is fighting for its very life, when the finest sons and daughters of the Ukraine give their lives battling the Fascist hangmen of the Ukraine and of Poland, these Polish politicians in their comfortable London offices eye like ravens the blood-drenched Ukrainian earth. They are again making plans how to tear away the western reaches of the Ukraine, in order again to exploit the Ukrainian people, again to carry out their cruel "pacification campaigns," again to shoot the workers of Lvov and Dorogobush, again to torture the finest sons of the Ukraine in concentration camps like the one at Beresa Kartuska. . . .

How did the Polish squires rule the Western Ukraine prior to September, 1939?

Eighty percent of the Ukrainian soil were in the hands of the Polish squires. Fifty percent of the peasants possessed less than two hectares of land and fifty percent of all peasant families did not own any horses. In all the Western Ukraine there were only 139 Ukrainian elementary schools. Entire districts as for instance the Krasnetski, Lopatinski and many others were altogether without medical institutions.

Even a big city like Lvov had only 14 hospitals and not a single clinic or easily accessible maternity hospital, nor any



kindergarten. There were 50,000 unemployed and 10,000 prostitutes.

And how did all this change in one year of incorporation of this Ukrainian land into the united Ukrainian Soviet State?

The peasants were given 1,000,000 hectares of land. In six months unemployment was wiped out. More than 50,000 found work in Lvov, 24,000 in Dorogobush, 11,000 in the Tarnopol district.

In 1941, there were 6,000 Ukrainian schools. Lvov, in 1940, possessed 43 hospitals, 30 polyclinics, 67 clinics, five maternity hospitals, and prostitution had been completely liquidated in all cities. In one year's time, 103 new hospitals had been opened throughout the Western Ukraine, and 20 maternity hospitals, 331 polyclinics and clinics and 108 kindergartens had been set up.

In only one year, 440,000 illiterate adults had been taught to read and write in their mother tongues. There were Polish high schools, a Polish theatre, Polish textbooks in Ukrainian and Russian, Polish newspapers, magazines and books.

No, gentlemen, Lvov and the Western Ukraine are not waiting for you. Only a hopeless idiot could dream of such a thing. . . .

Nettled by such allegations of Polish backwardness and cultural sterility, the Polish press in London and New York returned the compliment by circulating stories of Soviet atrocities in the occupied provinces of Eastern Poland. The purpose of this campaign was clearly indicated by Edmund Dombrowski in the May, 1942, issue of the weekly *Wiadomoscie Polskie*: "It is absolutely necessary to inform British public opinion that the population of Lvov by no means awaits the return of the Soviet armies with impatience. It has had enough of the memories of 1939-40. All it awaits now is the return of the Polish Army."

So, with one word and then another, Polish-Russian relations deteriorated rapidly in the spring of 1943. The United States, Great Britain, and the lesser Allies watched with growing uneasiness and concern how what at first had

looked like a minor family squabble developed into an open rupture between two members of the United Nations. But they were unable to halt the pernicious trend.

In March, 1943, the situation was further complicated by the unfortunate Ehrlich-Alter affair which brought the Polish Left, and in particular the Jewish intelligentsia, into sharp conflict with the Soviet regime. Thus into a very tragic case crept a note of irony as Jewish newspapers and organizations suddenly found themselves campaigning alongside of *Walka*, *Mysl Polska*, and other markedly anti-Semitic organs of the Polish landowning and military caste.

The facts of the matter were these: in December, 1942, a Soviet tribunal tried two well-known Jewish-Polish labor leaders, Henryk Ehrlich and Victor Alter, on a charge of undermining the morale of the Red Army. Both were found guilty, sentenced to death, and executed. The two men had once before, in August, 1941, stood trial on similar charges and had been condemned. At the time, they had been released at the request of the Polish government-in-exile. Rearrested and recondemned at a time when Polish-Soviet relations were becoming strained, Ehrlich and Alter were executed over the protest of several prominent leaders of the United Nations. The facts were brought to light through an exchange of letters between the Soviet Ambassador to Washington, Maxim Litvinov, and Presidents Philip Murray of the CIO and William Green of the AFL.

No one outside of the Soviet Union, and probably only a handful of people in that country, is in a position to say whether Ehrlich and Alter really were guilty of any crime other than political nonconformism. For my part, I find it hard to believe that two Jews, long prominent in the international labor movement, should have done anything to help Hitler win the war. It just doesn't make sense. What is more likely is that the two men engaged in something that

could be vaguely described as "Trotskyist agitation," and that they thus fell victim to the harsh discipline of the Bolshevik Party.

But even if one does disapprove of the purges and political executions still going on in the Soviet Union, although on a vastly reduced scale, no Socialist or Liberal should allow his feelings to run away with him to the point of playing into Hitler's hands. All those vociferous demonstrations, flaming protests, and full-page advertisements in the American press could not bring Ehrlich and Alter back to life; but they did a lot of harm to American-Russian relations.

There is reason to believe that the Ehrlich-Alter affair, sad as it was, was deliberately picked upon by a little clique of rabid Soviet-haters which embraces not only pro-Nazis and reactionaries but, alas, also a number of Social-Democrats and Liberals who often allow their unreasoning resentment against the Stalinist regime to get the better of their earnest desire to beat the Axis.

The nation-wide excitement over the Ehrlich-Alter case had hardly died down before a Polish Catholic bishop, Josef Gawlina, charged that 400,000 Polish children out of 1,000,000 allegedly transported to Russia in 1939-1940 had perished from hunger and exposure. This amazing statement, giving further details of alleged inhuman treatment of Polish children in the U.S.S.R.—which happens to be one of the countries where child welfare is best organized—was issued through the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington on April 1.

Two weeks later, the same organization issued another statement charging that Russia is holding 2,000,000 Poles as "virtual hostages," to force the Polish government's hand in the frontier dispute. These are only two examples of the manner in which the 3,000,000 Americans of Polish de-

scent, nearly all of them Catholics, are constantly being aroused against Soviet Russia.

Finally, in mid-April, 1943, the Nazi Propaganda Minister Paul Joseph Goebbels, who had long been looking around for a handy means of splitting the Allies as Germany's peril grew, scored the greatest political triumph of his career. The story he concocted was a true masterpiece of Machiavellian scheming, skilfully played on a unique combination of fact, fancy, and suspicion. For days on end, Axis newspapers and radio stations from Brussels to Shanghai harped on it in unending variations.

In a remote corner of the Katyn Forest near Smolensk, the Germans claimed to have unearthed a mass grave containing the bodies of 10,000 Polish officers allegedly massacred by the OGPU. The Nazi announcement gave a number of details about the location of Soviet prison camps and the number of Polish officers detained there at one time that seemed to square with known facts. Also, it is true that when the Polish forces were evacuated from Russia to Iran, only a comparatively small number of officers was with them. Thus, there existed a "mystery of the missing Polish officers" of which Goebbels had learned and which he set about to "solve" in his own way.

The Polish government-in-exile, which had made several fruitless inquiries in Moscow concerning the whereabouts of those officers who failed to show up in Iran, grew suspicious. It did not heed the warning of its own Premier, General Sikorski, who only a few weeks earlier had said, "We must be on guard against German propaganda. . . . Not for a moment should we give ear to the poisoned propaganda of the enemy."

Disregarding this sound advice, the Polish Minister of War, Lieutenant General Marjan Kukiel, on April 16 took the grave step of publicly asking the International Red

Cross to investigate the Katyn graves, thus giving the widest possible publicity, and at least an appearance of plausibility, to the German claims.

Although nothing ever came of it—a few days later the Polish government withdrew its suggestion which the Germans in the meantime had heartily endorsed—General Kukiel's imprudent echoing of a Nazi propaganda claim stands out as one of the most enormous and most fateful blunders committed by any Allied statesman in this war.

Even if he honestly believed—as he probably did—that there was some truth in the Goebbels story, General Kukiel should have thought twice before ventilating the matter in public. He should have remembered that the Nazis are past masters in this sort of propaganda frame-up as the experience of the Reichstag Fire and similar provocations has amply demonstrated.

Actually, there is good ground to believe that the Germans themselves massacred the Polish officers whose bodies they later unearthed with such a grandiose display of crocodile tears. What is more, the evidence on which this theory is based, has been provided by the Polish government itself.

Indeed, on June 18, 1942, an Associated Press dispatch from London (published in the *New York Times* of June 19) quoted a spokesman of the Polish government as saying that the Germans had arrested 13,500 Polish officers, in connection with the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, and that many of these had been shot. Why did the press, after having given world-wide publicity to Dr. Goebbels' fabrication, fail to dig up this perfect clue to the unsolved mystery?

In point of fact, the Nazis' own assertion that the bodies of persons allegedly killed in 1940 were still identifiable in 1943 and that passports, visiting cards, and paper money had been found intact, indicates that the slayings must have

taken place at a much more recent date. And why did the Germans, who captured Smolensk in mid-July, 1941, wait almost two years before springing their discovery on the world? Why did the "Bolshevist Jewish commissars," whom the Germans named as perpetrators of the massacre, wait for almost two years in the German-occupied territory until at last it occurred to the Gestapo to arrest them? There can be no doubt whatever that the Nazi story was a frame-up which could achieve its purpose only because of the Polish government's susceptibility and suspiciousness and also because of a world-wide tendency to credit tales of Soviet atrocities, however crudely fabricated.

#### MOSCOW SETS UP A COUNTER-GOVERNMENT

Even before the Katyn affair precipitated an acute crisis in the relations between the Soviet government and the Polish regime of General Sikorski, there had been signs of a new Russian policy toward Poland. Since the agreements of July 30 and August 14, 1941, had proved unworkable and the Polish armed forces had been withdrawn to Iran, the Russians lost all interest in the Polish alliance. They had counted on getting effective military assistance from the Sikorski regime and in this hope had gone a long way toward subduing strong personal and political differences with the Polish leaders in London. When this aid failed to materialize, and an irritating controversy over post-war boundaries took the place of immediate joint action against the common enemy, the Russians considered that no further good could come of having relations with Sikorski.

They then looked around for other Polish collaborators and had no difficulty in finding them. There lived in Moscow a group of Polish Communists formerly connected with the Comintern which admirably served the purpose. As it appeared certain that the Polish masses, whether in the

Nazi-occupied homeland or abroad, would not respond to Bolshevik propaganda, Stalin decided on a new approach not unlike the one adopted toward Germany (see Chapter III). A new movement was to be launched with a Communist nucleus and a broad democratic program that would appeal to the Polish peasant masses and wean them away from the exile regime in London.

Thus, early in 1943, the "Union of Polish Patriots in the U.S.S.R." was formed under the spirited leadership of Madame Wanda Wasilewska, school teacher, novelist, and wife of Alexander Korneichuk. In the first week of March appeared No. 1 of a new weekly *Volna Polska* ("Free Poland") which, as organ of the Union of Polish Patriots, has become as revealing and reliable a barometer of Soviet policy toward Poland as *Freies Deutschland* and the Free Germany Committee are in so far as Germany is concerned.

One of the first steps of the Union of Polish Patriots was to organize a new Polish fighting force that would take the place of General Anders' evacuated army. Though the bulk of the Polish troops set up in 1941-1942 had followed General Anders to Iran, a not inconsiderable number of officers and soldiers stayed behind to fight with the Red Army. With this cadre on hand, and tens of thousands of Poles still scattered all over the Soviet Union, it was not long before the first Polish division, named after the great Polish-American patriot Tadeusz Kosciuszko, had been set up. For its political purposes too, the Union of Polish Patriots was able to draw on vast numbers of Polish men and women who had fled from the Nazi terror or had been residents of the provinces annexed by the Soviet Union in 1939.

Commander of the new Kosciuszko Division became Colonel Zigmund Berling, a brilliant and highly decorated Polish officer who had been chief of staff of the Fifth Polish Army Corps at Cracow, before the Nazi invasion.

Later, when General Anders organized his army in Russia, Colonel Berling became chief of staff of the Fifth Division. But he did not get along well with his commander-in-chief, for Berling was as much of a Leftist as Anders was a Rightist. When the Poles left for Iran, Berling was the highest-ranking officer who stayed. On August 11, 1943, Marshal Stalin promoted Berling to major-general—the first time that this high rank had been conferred on any foreigner fighting with the Red Army.

A few months earlier, Berling, in an interview with the Red Army newspaper *Red Star*, had said: "We want to fight the Germans on Polish territory and we hope this is not far off. Our division will soon be at the front and the world knows how the Polish soldier fights." General Berling's hope has since been fulfilled. In mid-October, 1943, dispatches from Moscow indicated that the Kosciuszko Division had gone into action in the direction of the Polish border and that it was fighting under the slogan: "God Is With Us and Poland Is Before Us." About the same time Wanda Wasilewska declared at a meeting of the All-Slav Committee in Moscow that the Kosciuszko Division would soon be followed by another Polish division now in training and that plans had been made for the formation of an entire Polish army corps.

Thus, the makings of a Polish counter-government in Moscow were far progressed when the Soviet government, on April 25, 1943, formally severed relations with the Polish government in London. The action was prompted by Soviet indignation over the Polish note to the International Red Cross, demanding an investigation of the Katyn massacre, but there is good ground to believe that this was merely the drop that caused the cup to overflow. Probably the Russians were not displeased at all by the op-



portunity for a break afforded them by the Polish blunder.

Count Tadeusz Romer, the Polish Ambassador, left Moscow on April 29. The day before, Wanda Wasilewska in an article published by *Izvestia* flatly disputed the right of the Sikorski government to speak in the name of the Polish people. "Whom does the Polish émigré government represent?" she asked. "The Polish people? No. The Polish people never elected, never appointed, never invested this government with powers. The present Polish government took over the functions of the remnants of the Rydz-Smigly government which fled from Poland, of the government of Poland's September defeat."

Other Soviet papers also bitterly denounced the Sikorski regime. *Pravda*, naming a number of wealthy Polish aristocrats, like the Radziwills, Potockys, and Sapegas, asserted that these big landowners, acting through middlemen, were responsible for the Polish government's intransigent stand on the frontier issue, in the vain hope of getting their former holdings back. *Red Star* declared that 40,000,000 Ukrainians would not allow their land to become an object of international barter.

In the following weeks and months, American and British diplomats worked feverishly to heal the Russo-Polish breach. But things had already gone too far. Moscow flatly refused to go back on its decision. However, the efforts of London and Washington were not altogether unsuccessful. They obtained, at least for the time being, that the Soviet government refrained from giving official status to the Union of Polish Patriots. Although it has virtually developed into a counter-government, and may at any time officially become one, the Union of Polish Patriots has not been recognized as such thus far.

What, then, are Stalin's plans for Poland? In attempting

to answer this difficult question, we have one recent and direct statement by the Soviet Premier to guide us. In answer to two questions put to him in writing by the Moscow correspondent of the *New York Times*, Ralph Parker, Stalin on May 4, 1943, sent the following letter:

*Dear Mr. Parker,*

On May 3 I received your two questions concerning the Polish-Soviet relations. Here are my answers:

1. *Question:* Does the Government of the U.S.S.R. desire to see a strong and independent Poland after the defeat of Hitler's Germany?

*Answer:* Unquestionably, it does.

2. *Question:* On what fundamentals is it your opinion that the relations between Poland and the U.S.S.R. should be based after the war?

*Answer:* Upon the fundament of solid good neighborly relations and mutual respect, or, should the Polish people so desire,—upon the fundament of an alliance providing for mutual assistance against the Germans as the chief enemies of the Soviet Union and Poland.

*With respect,*

*Signed:* J. STALIN

Stalin is not a man of many words. His letter does not go into details, but we may safely draw three conclusions from it:

1. There are no plans afoot to incorporate Poland into the Soviet Union. Stalin's affirmation that his government "unquestionably" desires to see a "strong and independent" Poland after the war is quite unambiguous. He would not have used such expressions if he aimed at the future incorporation of Poland in the U.S.S.R. This is also borne out by his omission of the Poles in his afore-cited speeches (see pages 18-19) in which he mentioned the Letts, Lithuanians, Estonians, Moldavians, and Karelians in one breath with the Ukrainians and Byelorussians as brothers to be liberated—but not the Poles.

2. By addressing himself in Answer 2 to the Polish people, not to the Polish government, Stalin makes it quite clear that he

does not intend to resume relations with the Polish government-in-exile.

3. Answer 2 also contains a direct offer for a future alliance between Poland and the U.S.S.R. and a guarantee of Poland's western frontiers—such as they will be fixed after the war—against renewed German aggression.

As to the internal structure and political complexion of the New Poland that Stalin would like to see emerge from this war, we may find the answer in the "Declaration of Principles" adopted by the Union of Polish Patriots at its recent convention in Moscow (June 8–9, 1943). Here is, with a few unimportant omissions, the text of this interesting document, translated from *Russky Golos*, June 23, 1943:

The Union of Polish Patriots in the U.S.S.R. was founded with the aim of uniting in wartime all Poles living on Soviet territory, irrespective of their political, social and religious views, into one patriotic camp for the fight against Hitlerism.

The Union, according to its statutes, endeavors to help the Polish nation liberate its country from the German yoke; to organize the armed struggle of the Poles alongside of the Red Army against the German invaders; to fight for the restoration of the sovereign rights and the independence of the Polish State, and for the creation of a *democratic and parliamentary constitution* in a free Poland; to tighten the bonds of friendship between the Polish people and the peoples of the U.S.S.R. . . .

The fury of destruction, the cynicism and the cruelty with which Nazi Germany is annihilating our people makes it a primary Polish task to ensure our national existence once and for all against the possibility of a new German imperialistic threat.

A sensible Polish policy, now as before 1939, should aim at an alliance with the Soviet Union, our only natural ally.

The Union, therefore, strives, in concert with other Polish associations throughout the world, to make sure that there is friendship and comradeship-in-arms between Poland and the U.S.S.R., and a solid alliance after the war. It also strives to

terminate at last and for all times the period of ancient dissensions and quarrels between Poland and Czechoslovakia and to make the political and economical cooperation between these two countries a reality.

The Union of Polish Patriots in the U.S.S.R. fights for:

A *democratic* Poland, where the national interests are not subordinated to the interests of the governing, and where a truly national government holds office;

A *parliamentary* Poland where a *democratic Sejm* will determine the rights of the government and the obligations of the citizens;

A modern Poland, where the agricultural system will be reformed, where the soil will be given to the peasants, in particular to those who do not own any or only little land, and also to share-croppers and day laborers, where creative work will form the basis of existence of the citizens and of society, where our economical and cultural backwardness will be quickly eliminated;

A Poland freed of the rule of the country squires, monopolists, bank usurers and Stock Exchange speculators, where the free farmer will be master on his own soil, where the worker and the intellectual will find work, state insurance and living conditions worthy of human existence; where the artisan, the merchant and the manufacturer will be given public aid in the framework of a planned national economy;

A free Poland, where the outrages committed by the Fascist invaders against private citizens, institutions, societies, the Church and the community will be set right, where just punishment will be meted out to traitors and renegades and loyal service in the army or in the guerrilla and partisan formations will be rewarded;

A Poland of *civil, political and religious freedom*, without racial or national hatred, a Poland of *freedom of speech and conscience*;

An independent Poland that will not be a pawn of foreign imperialism, nor the object of exploitation;

A Poland strong in foreign affairs not through conquest of foreign territories but by dint of friendly relations with all our allies;

A Poland progressive, peaceful, internally reborn.

After the victorious conclusion of the war, the Polish character of Silesia must be restored. The Polish masses in Silesia must be reunited with the mother country. The mouth of the Vistula, principal life artery of our country, must return to Polish hands. *East Prussia cannot continue to exist as a bastion of German imperialism and as a barrier separating Poland from the Baltic. East Prussia must become a Polish bridge to the Baltic.*

Condemning the part taken by the government Rydz-Smigly-Beck in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, we hold the view that our frontier on the Olsa must be regulated anew by peaceful means, in cooperation with a restored Czechoslovakian State and that it must not be allowed to interfere with a solid friendship between our peoples.

The eastern frontier of Poland must become a link, and not a barrier, between ourselves and our neighbor in the east.

While we proceed from the principle that all Polish territories should be reunited within the boundaries of the Polish State, it is our opinion that the Treaty of Riga did not answer the legitimate aspirations of the Ukrainians and Byelorussians to be united with their own national states. In conformity with the principles of freedom for which the United Nations fight against Hitler, *we do not demand for ourselves even one inch of Ukrainian, Byelorussian or Lithuanian earth.*

It is high time to fill up the artificially created gulf that has so long separated us from the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Russian and Czech peoples who are so close to us in language, spirit and history. In an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding the question of national minorities can and will be rapidly solved in the interests of all nations concerned.

Secure in the east and south, strong through the support of our allies, we shall be in a position to assume the burden of joint responsibility for mounting a peaceful guard *on the Oder* so as to make a new German aggression impossible.

While it condemns the policies of the government of General Sikorski, the Union of Polish Patriots in the U.S.S.R. by no means maintains a negative attitude toward all those who continue to be loyal to that government. Everyone who fights against the Hitlerite tyranny, irrespective of his relationship with the Sikorski government—whether he be a Polish flyer

in Britain, a marine, a soldier or a follower of Sikorski in Poland really fighting against the occupation forces—is our friend and brother. [My italics]

It is to be regretted that this important declaration, which matches the Free German manifesto in content and spirit, should have gone almost totally unheeded in America. This is, of course, due to the fact that none of our correspondents in Moscow found it interesting enough for transmission, just as they ignored the Free German manifesto until the Soviet press called their attention to it.

If this declaration is to be regarded as indicative of Stalin's ideas about post-war Poland—and that is exactly what the circumstances suggest—then we can rest assured that he wants a Communist Poland no more than he goes in for a Communist Germany. The declaration repeatedly refers to a democratic and parliamentary regime, and it specifically calls for a *democratic Sejm*, which is the traditional name of the Polish parliament. Nowhere is there any mention of Soviets or other institutions characteristic of the Bolshevik regime.

Undoubtedly a drastic agricultural reform is planned and this alone will keep a good many of the London Poles from endorsing the Declaration of Principles. But here again we should note that the measures proposed are of a progressive rather than of a revolutionary character. There is not a word about collectivization; what is planned is a parcelling of the large estates for the benefit of peasants and farmhands. In view of the indisputable fact that the latifundia and the junkers' caste bear the primary responsibility for the unsettled conditions, the misery, and the unending wars in Central and Eastern Europe, no sensible person should object to such a program.

There is one more point in this declaration that deserves the closest attention. While the Union of Polish Patriots

in the U.S.S.R. not unnaturally falls in with Stalin's views on the eastern boundaries of Poland, the claims which it stakes out in the west go as far as anything yet advanced by the Polish government-in-exile.

Indeed, the "mouth of the Vistula," which must "return to Polish hands," means Danzig; the Oder, where the Polish Patriots propose to mount guard, is far to the west of the 1939 Polish-German frontier; and East Prussia, which "must become a Polish bridge to the Baltic," is ethnographically German national territory.

All this would seem to indicate that Stalin is prepared to offer Poland a handsome compensation in the west to make up for the lost provinces in the east. While it is hard to sympathize with Germany, after all that she has done to the world, one cannot fail to observe that this sort of horse-trading is definitely not in harmony with the spirit of the Atlantic Charter. To toss a large chunk of non-Polish territory in the west to the Poles in order to make them more readily let go the non-Polish territories in the east may be sound power politics, but it has nothing in common with the principle of national self-determination.

A few weeks after the adoption of this program by the Poles in Russia, the leader of the Poles in England, General Sikorski, perished in an airplane accident at Gibraltar. On July 14, the Polish President, Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz, announced the formation of a new Cabinet headed by Premier Stanislaw Mikolajczyk.

While the new government unquestionably was formed on a broader democratic basis than its predecessor—it is made up of three members of the Peasant Party, including the Premier, three Socialists, two National Liberals, two National Democrats, and three non-party men—one cannot say that it represents a determined break with the past.

Actually the Mikolajczyk cabinet, though it is considera-

bly farther to the left than was Sikorski's government, has an even slimmer chance of arriving at a reconciliation with Russia. To a certain extent, at least, General Sikorski personally was *persona grata* in Moscow. He was not unfriendly to Russia, and he worked sincerely and persistently for an understanding between the two countries. Even though in the last months of his life, his name in Russian eyes came to stand for a hostile policy, of which he did not approve at heart, General Sikorski continued to be highly regarded by the Soviet leaders. His untimely death was a great and possibly irreparable loss for his country.

The new cabinet is ostensibly controlled by the Leftist Peasant and Socialist Parties. However, contrary to what might be expected, the leadership of both these parties has adopted quite as uncompromising a stand against territorial concessions to Russia as have the parties of the Right.

Indeed, the Polish Socialist Party, whose principal representative in the new government is the Vice-Premier and Minister of Industry, Commerce, and Shipping, Jan Kwapinski, went so far, in a resolution passed on June 30, 1943, as to declare that "all those who on this fundamental question have a different opinion . . . place themselves outside the Polish Socialist Party" (*The Nation*, October 9, 1943).

In contrast with this uncompromising attitude of all important Polish groups in Great Britain, a representative movement of Polish intellectuals in the United States has recently signed an "Appeal to Reason" opposing the policies of the Polish government-in-exile. The signers included Professor Oscar Lange of the University of Chicago, Professor Karpinski of the University of Michigan, the poet Julian Tuwim, and the famous painter Arthur Szyk, with many others (*The Nation*, *ibid.*).



Premier Mikolajczyk's chances of coming to an agreement with Russia are even further dimmed by his acceptance of General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, a close friend of the late Marshal Josef Pilsudski and of his successor Marshal Smigly-Rydz, as commander-in-chief of the Polish Army. It is true that Mikolajczyk did not want General Sosnkowski as military successor of Sikorski, and that he even threatened to resign when President Raczkiewicz forced the appointment through by virtue of his prerogative, but he eventually gave in to the President's stronger will.

General Sosnkowski, who even in July, 1941, was so hostile to Russia that he resigned from the cabinet in protest against the Sikorski-Maisky agreement (p. 64), is totally unacceptable for the Soviet government. As long as he remains in charge of the Polish Army, there is no prospect of a reconciliation with Russia.

Such a reconciliation, however, is a matter of life-or-death if not for Poland then at least for the Polish government-in-exile. The Red Army, including the Kosciuszko Division, stands only a few miles from the Polish border; the nearest units of the Sosnkowski army are thousands of miles away. On whose side the organized forces of the Polish underground preponderantly are, is anybody's guess.

Under these circumstances the risk that the Soviet armies will create an accomplished fact that leaves the Mikolajczyk government stranded in its London offices is real and imminent. The only way to forestall such a development would seem to be a complete change of heart of the Poles in Britain on the all-important question of friendly relations with Russia. Unfortunately the attitude taken by the Polish government-in-exile on the eve of the Foreign Ministers' conference in Moscow does not suggest that it has learned anything from recent events.

The Soviet Union is a powerful state that can afford to make enemies if it chooses to do so; but Poland cannot. Today more than ever Polish patriots the world over should take to heart the message: "Jeszcze Polska nie zginela." No, Poland is not lost—yet.

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## CHAPTER V

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# Restoration of the Baltic States?

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THE problem of the three Baltic States is less complicated, but at the same time even more ticklish, than the Polish-Russian dispute, for the issue involved in this case is one not just of frontiers, but of independent existence.

Whereas the fixation of the post-war boundary between Poland and the U.S.S.R. conceivably might be entrusted to an international board of arbitration, or a United Nations commission, it is hard to see how a similar procedure could be resorted to in the case of the Baltic States. Indeed, how could anyone even attempt to conciliate these two diametrically opposed points of view: (a) that the Baltic States have been forcibly annexed by the U.S.S.R. and that their independent existence has been blotted out; (b) that they have voluntarily and freely joined the U.S.S.R. as constituent republics, with their independence and national existence intact within the framework of the Union.

These are, in a nutshell, the two conflicting theses of the Baltic controversy. The first is propounded by the still functioning diplomatic representations of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania in Washington, with considerable support from Baltic Americans and other Americans as well. The second constitutes the official view of the Soviet govern-

ment which furthermore holds that a Baltic problem simply does not exist.

What constitutes independence is highly debatable. Since the constitution of the U.S.S.R. grants to the member republics the formal right to secede from the Union, it may well be argued, at least theoretically, that the Baltic States have not lost their independence at all. This is, of course, a very formalistic approach to our problem, although it is certain that the Baltic countries, after their incorporation in the U.S.S.R. in 1940 did retain a large measure of self-rule, including a complete setup of legislative, executive, and judicial state organs.

People less inclined to formalism, however, will argue that the Baltic States lost their independence the moment the Red Army and Soviet emissaries took over effective control of their administrative machinery and organized elections that can hardly be described as having been fair and untrammelled.

On the other hand, it is also a matter of controversy whether the Baltic countries ever have been wholly independent. Nominally they became so in 1918 when they broke away from the Russian Empire to which they had belonged for centuries.

Lithuania was the first to cut loose from Mother Russia's apron-strings. Taking advantage of the chaos created by the Bolshevik Revolution, the Lithuanians, on February 16, 1918, proclaimed their independence after having belonged to Russia for 145 years.

A few days later, on February 24, Estonia severed her ties with Russia to which she had been annexed by Peter the Great as a result of his victory over Sweden in 1721. For two hundred years before that annexation, Estonia had belonged to the Swedish crown, which accounts for the fact that a small minority of 8,000 persons of Swedish stock still

live in Estonia. In the Middle Ages, the country was dominated by the Teutonic Knights. It is interesting to note that prior to 1918, the Estonians, a race of Finnish origin, had never had a completely independent state existence.

Latvia did not proclaim her independence until November 18, 1918. Like their Estonian neighbors, the Letts had never tasted complete independence before that date. They too had lived for centuries under German and Polish rule and were eventually absorbed by the Russian Empire after the Third Partition of Poland in 1795.

This comparative inexperience in self-government would seem largely to account for the fact that all three countries, after a good democratic start, fell under Fascist and Nazi influences and became tight little dictatorships.

Lithuania was the first of the three to go "authoritarian." On November 16, 1926, the Liberal-Socialist Cabinet Slezevicius was overthrown by a military *coup d'état* which also forced President Kazys Grinius to resign and again put the former President Antanas Smetona in the saddle. As pretext for the revolt, the military charged the constitutional government with laxity toward Communist agitation, but their principal grievance was the conclusion, by the government Slezevicius, of a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union. This is an important fact to bear in mind in passing judgment on subsequent events.

President Smetona promptly dissolved the *Seimas* (parliament), disbanded all political parties, abolished civil liberties, and dictated a new constitution of his own making. Until the summer of 1940, he ruled supreme with the aid of the military and of a Lithuanian variety of storm-troopers.

While Smetona took his cue from Mussolini, and indeed became dictator long before Hitler, Latvia and Estonia did not become authoritarian until after the triumph of Nazism

in Germany. In May, 1934, the Latvian Prime Minister Karlis Ulmanis, without apparent reason, suppressed the parliamentary form of government, and two years later he proclaimed himself president in flagrant violation of the country's constitution.

Estonia, under President Konstantin Päts, was continually beset by Fascist influences and intrigues since 1933. In 1934, Päts suspended the constitution, declared martial law, and the following year he suppressed all political parties. By and large, however, K. Päts was a moderate and benevolent dictator, who simply followed the trend of the times.

Anyhow, to think of these countries as brave little democracies devoured by a dictatorship is nothing short of fanciful. The form of government introduced in the Baltic States by the Soviet annexation of 1940 is hardly more dictatorial than what all of them had gone through since the early 1930's. Thus, the issue confronting us is not one of democracy vs. dictatorship—as some exiled Baltic diplomats would have us believe—but purely one of national existence.

It is well to remember in this connection that when the Baltic States in 1918 proclaimed their independence, the government of the United States was in no hurry to extend *de jure* recognition to them. As a matter of fact, Washington withheld full recognition for more than four years, granting it at last in July, 1922 "reluctantly and with the belief that it was provisional." \*

This highly important fact, which is being almost completely by-passed in the present controversy over the Soviet Union's claim to the Baltic countries, is fully documented in the State Department's official collection of Papers Concerning Foreign Relations for 1922, two of which deserve

\* Walter Lippmann, *U.S. Foreign Policy*, p. 142.

attention here. They are: (a) a report by Mr. Evan E. Young, at the time American High Commissioner at Riga, of April 6, 1922, which formed the basis for the State Department's decision to recognize the Baltic States *de jure*; and (b) a dispatch of July 25, 1922, addressed by the Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes to Mr. Young asking him to inform the Baltic governments of the American *de jure* recognition.\*

In recommending to the Secretary of State that Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania now should be recognized as independent states, Mr. Young stated at the time: \*\* “. . . It is entirely possible, or even probable, that some time in the indefinite future these *so-called States* may once again become an integral part of Russia. . . . Admitting that, from our viewpoint, a strong Russia is greatly to be desired, it is still difficult for an observer here to suggest any course of action other than the immediate recognition of these States. . . . Later, it is not improbable that through the operation of fundamental economic laws these countries will become *a part of a federated Russia* or will retain autonomous powers, but will be linked with the Russian government through close economic and political treaties and agreements. . . .” [My italics] (Foreign Relations, 1922, II, pp. 871-72)

The same note of hesitation and caution is to be found in the text of the State Department's declaration extending full recognition to the Baltic States:

The Governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have been recognized *de jure* or *de facto* by the principal Governments of Europe and have entered into treaty relations with their neighbors.

In extending to them recognition on its part, the Government of the United States takes cognizance of the actual exist-

\* Cf. “Baltiiskie Gosudarstva, Amerika i Rossiya” by V. Sukhomlin in *Novoye Russkoye Slovo*, March 13, 1943.

\*\* Walter Lippmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-43.

ence of these Governments during a considerable period of time and of the successful maintenance within their borders of political and economic stability.

The United States has consistently maintained that the disturbed conditions of Russian affairs may not be made the occasion for their alienation of Russian territory, and this principle is not deemed to be infringed by the recognition *at this time* of the Governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania which have been set up and maintained by an indigenous population. [My italics] (Foreign Relations, 1922, II, pp. 873-74)

This belated and reluctant recognition, which hardly went beyond the acknowledgment of an accomplished fact, is particularly noteworthy on two counts: because it came long after not only the European powers, but Russia herself had unreservedly recognized the independence of the Baltic States; and because of Secretary Hughes' well-known anti-Soviet opinions which Mr. Young must have fully shared, if one may judge by several disparaging remarks about the new Moscow regime contained in his report.

It is a far cry from this grudging recognition of the "so-called States" of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania extended "at this time," to the great moral indignation frequently voiced in the press today over what are supposed to be Moscow's imperialistic ambitions in the Baltic area. There is not the slightest indication that Secretary Hughes or his adviser Mr. Young regarded the independent existence of the Baltic countries as a dictate of equity or of international morality. They did not even consider that it was, from the viewpoint of American interests, more desirable than the existence of a strong Russia.

Furthermore, Mr. Young's report clearly foresaw the eventual return of the Baltic States into a "federated Russia"—exactly what the Soviet Union, which at the time was not constituted yet, is—and the Secretary of State by qualifying his recognition through the use of the words "at this



time" gave to understand that he was in agreement with this view.

It is true that the present Administration took a different line in the matter, which may seem paradoxical in view of the fact that it was President Roosevelt who recognized the Soviet Union, while President Harding, whose Secretary of State Mr. Hughes was, emphatically refused to do so.

The paradox becomes less puzzling, though, if we consider the particular circumstances under which Mr. Sumner Welles, Undersecretary of State, on July 23, 1940, made his oft-invoked statement officially condemning the annexation of the Baltic States by Russia. At the time, the Soviet Union still had its notorious pact with Hitler and practically the whole civilized world was up in arms against this unholy alliance. Besides, few people suspected then that Russia's expansionist moves in the west were motivated not by imperialist designs but by a legitimate desire to buttress herself against the coming Nazi crusade.

Hence a sensible interpretation of Mr. Welles' protest would be that it was made for political rather than for moral or legal reasons and that it does not prejudice a reconsideration of the matter in the light of present conditions. In the meantime, however, the Soviet annexation of the Baltic States has gone unrecognized in this country, the non-existent Baltic governments still maintain regular legations in Washington and American courts steadfastly refuse to recognize Soviet sovereignty over Baltic citizens or Baltic property, especially shipping.

## ✓HOW THE BALTIC STATES WERE LIQUIDATED

Probably more than any other consideration, it was the manner in which the Baltic countries were gobbled by the U.S.S.R. in the summer of 1940, that prompted this country and others to withhold recognition of the accomplished

fact. It cannot be denied that the process had all the hallmarks of a Nazi-Fascist seizure of foreign territory: military occupation, trumped-up elections, puppet governments, and finally annexation.

But here again we must not overlook the fact that the Soviet Union in occupying the Baltic countries acted under strong provocation and that its aims were primarily of a *preventive*, not an aggressive, nature.

Years before the outbreak of the European war, the governments and the ruling classes in all three Baltic countries had fallen under strong German influence and had become more or less openly subservient to Hitler's aggressive designs in the East.

Latvia and Estonia, in particular, were susceptible to German ascendancy, because their upper classes were largely composed of Teutonic elements, the notorious "Baltic barons." (In Lithuania, the German element did not predominate to the same extent, except for the Klaipeda or Memel district which belonged to Germany before the last war.)

In the period between the Munich Pact and the seizure of the Baltic countries by Russia, this German penetration became strongly marked both in the political and economic fields. German industry and finance acquired a virtual monopoly over the Baltic market and the administrative system in all three countries was patterned more and more after the Nazi model. In their foreign policy, the Baltic States became, in the words of Walter Lippmann, "focal points of intrigue against Russia" (*New York Herald Tribune*, April 6, 1943).

As in the case of Finland, which I shall discuss in the next chapter, it was this Nazi ascendancy, operating both from within and from without, that caused Russia's relations with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to deteriorate steadily

and eventually led to the total absorption of these countries by the U.S.S.R.

The Russians, with their excellent intelligence service, never missed a jot of what the Nazis were doing in the Baltic States. They knew all about the secret bases at the service of the Wehrmacht, the Nazi Party "Stützpunkte" and their tie-ups with local Fascist groups, the "harbor service stations," and other fifth column activities. The Germans, working hard to compromise the Baltic governments in the eyes of Moscow, in order to make them accessories to their planned crusade, were extremely successful. The Russians looked on, took note, and bided their time.

That time came in August, 1939, when Hitler, in one of his sudden reversals of policy, decided to beat the democracies first and deal with Russia later. To free his hands for the immediate undertaking, he offered Stalin a non-aggression pact, a free hand in the Baltic area and one half of Poland. Stalin fell in with the suggestion, not, as we know today, because he had suddenly become Hitler's friend, but because it afforded him a priceless opportunity to strengthen Russia's first line of defense for the eventual contest. He was going to beat Hitler at his own game.

The outbreak of war in the west tied down Germany's energies for the immediate future. Hitler at the time did not dare take on the Red Army at the same time as the armies of Great Britain and France. He had not become yet flushed with victory and a reckless gambler. The German High Command had not forgotten the lesson of World War I: that a two-front war must needs be fatal to Germany (the Polish campaign was never regarded as a real front in this sense). As long as Germany's forces were busy in the west, the Russians were free to move in the east. They moved.

Once Poland had been disposed of, the Soviets promptly turned their attention to the Baltic States. Hitler had intended them as springboards for the eventual assault on Russia; now Stalin turned them instead into buffer states designed to absorb the first shock of the invasion.

His plan of campaign was simple and ruthless, and it worked. At first, he would only ask for military and naval bases; next, extend this foothold into a total occupation; finally, through political action, obtain total incorporation in the U.S.S.R.

Estonia came first on the agenda. With her paltry 18,353 square miles of territory and a population of only 1,134,000, she was the smallest and weakest of Russia's neighbors; she also happened to be closest at hand.

For Moscow to raise any demands whatever with a minimum of decorum, "incidents" were needed. The Estonians, who had been scared to death by the Kremlin Pact of August 24, 1939, would not provide them. So the incidents happened without Estonian cooperation. There were notably two of them.

After the fall of Gdynia to the Germans, the Polish submarine "Orzel" had taken refuge in the Estonian port of Tallinn and had been interned; on September 18, she escaped for an unknown destination. Moscow protested sharply although the Russians, curiously enough, were not officially at war with Poland. A few days later, the Soviet freighter "Metallist" went down in Narva Bay, torpedoed by an "unknown submarine."

Thereupon Estonia's Foreign Minister Karl Selter was summoned to the Kremlin for a talk—or else. What happened next was a little Berchtesgaden *à la russe*. After an icy reception at the Moscow airport by a subordinate official, Selter was bundled off to the Kremlin where Molotov

took him to task like a schoolboy. At the end, Selter was curtly informed that Russia desired to lease three naval and air bases in Estonia. After a long and dramatic telephone conversation with President Päts, Selter gave in. There was nothing he or anybody else could do about it.

Under such pressure, Estonia, on September 28, 1939 signed the ten-year mutual assistance pact with Russia that gave the Red Army the right to occupy Paldiski, Hapsalu, and the islands of Dagö and Oesel for the establishment of naval and air bases. The pact contained no clauses restricting Estonia's political independence.

With Estonia out of the way, the Russians lost no time in applying the thumbscrews to Latvia (area: 25,402 square miles; population: 1,950,502) and to Lithuania (area: 22,959 square miles; population: 2,879,070). Both yielded quickly.

Through their treaty with Latvia, on October 5, 1939, the Russians acquired naval bases at Liepaja (Libau), Ventspils (Windau), and Pitragi; they were also given the right to set up a number of airfields on Latvian territory.

Lithuania, on October 10, got the most favorable deal of the three. In return for the right to maintain limited land and air forces on Lithuanian territory, Russia ceded the city and district of Vilnius (Vilna) to Lithuania. This generous gesture didn't cost the Soviet much for it had just taken Vilna from the Poles. To the Lithuanians, however, the cession meant a great deal, for Vilnius was the historical capital of Lithuania and had been assigned to that country by the Curzon Line (see page 71). The city fell to the Poles on October 9, 1920 through a *coup de main* engineered by the Polish general Zeligowski, an act of violence which the Lithuanian government never recognized.

Into their treaty with Lithuania, the Russians inserted a clause that clearly gave away their concern over Ger-

many's future intentions: they obtained the right to build a fortified line along the German-Lithuanian border and to back it up with a string of air bases.

Military occupation, even on a limited scale, almost invariably tends to become total and to result eventually in political domination as well. If the Estonians, Letts, and Lithuanians had any doubts on this score, the Germans had not. That is one reason why Hitler late in 1939 decided to "take home" the roughly 107,000 *Volksdeutsche*, or German nationals (but not Reich citizens), who at the time were living in the Baltic countries (62,000 in Latvia, 29,000 in Lithuania, 16,000 in Estonia).

These Baltic Germans were the remnants of once large and prosperous colonies, the oldest German settlements abroad. They were descendants of the Teutonic Knights and Hanseatic merchants who jointly conquered the Baltic countries seven centuries ago. Before 1914, they numbered a quarter of a million but after the war a steady decline set in, due both to evictions and to a stagnant birth rate. Thus the "repatriation" ordered by Hitler merely put the finishing touch to a historic process of extinction.

By agreement with the local governments, and later with the Soviet authorities, practically the entire German population in the Baltic States was "repatriated" in the years 1939-1941, roughly 80,000 from Latvia and Estonia (including some non-Germans), and 52,600 from Lithuania.

Since the last-named figure is considerably higher than the total of German nationals in Lithuania, and taking into account the fact that in each of the three countries a few Germans chose to remain, it is obvious that a large number of full-blooded Lithuanians posed as *Volksdeutsche* for fear of the Bolshevik regime they saw coming.

The state of semi-independence thus created for the Baltic countries lasted less than a year. Following the fall of

France, and faced with the possibility of an imminent collapse of Great Britain—a contingency that would have released tremendous Nazi forces for action elsewhere—the Russians went all-out in their preparations to meet the German assault which they knew was inevitable.

One of the chief defensive measures decided upon by the Kremlin was the total occupation of the Baltic States by the Red Army. On June 15, 1940, the Lithuanian government accepted what it could not prevent anyway, and opened the country's frontiers to an unlimited Soviet army of occupation. A few days later, Latvia and Estonia likewise were occupied by Soviet forces.

With the occupying troops went the political commissars, and in their wake arrived the men of the N.K.V.D. (formerly OGPU). Before long, local Communist groups and workers' organizations raised a clamor for "democratic" governments to take the place of the incumbent semi-Fascist regimes. The new cabinets in all three countries were practically appointed by Soviet emissaries and imposed on the reluctant presidents.

On July 14, 1940, elections were held throughout Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, all for the same purpose and after the same pattern. The people were called to the polls to decide whether or not their countries should apply for admission to the Soviet Union. Actually, the campaign everywhere was managed by the Soviet commissars with the aid of the local Communist parties dressed up as "workers' bloc" or similar fancy names. The returns were, as expected, ninety percent or more in favor of the approved list of candidates, all of them pro-Soviet.

The next step likewise was a foregone conclusion. As one man, the three new parliaments voted to abolish the capitalist system, convert their countries into soviet republics, and apply for admission to the U.S.S.R.

On August 3, 1940, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. accepted Lithuania as the fourteenth constituent republic of the Union, followed by Latvia and Estonia as the fifteenth and sixteenth republics.

Needless to say, all the incumbents and appointees of the fallen regimes were promptly removed from office. Many of them were arrested and deported to Siberia, others fled abroad or simply disappeared.

Among those who escaped was President Smetona of Lithuania. He fled to Germany, where, it is reported, a car was waiting for him at the border which took him direct to Berlin. Later, he came to the United States where he is still living (Cf. the letter addressed on April 25, 1943, to the editor of the *New York Herald Tribune* by Mr. Casimir P. Palmer, former Director of Military Intelligence and Citizens' Safety Department of Lithuania).

#### THE BALTIC STATES IN THE "OSTLAND"

Less than a year later, the situation was once more reversed by the fortunes of war. The three countries were swiftly overrun by the Nazi armies in the first two months of the Russian campaign. The conquest of Lithuania, in particular, was made easy through a nationalist uprising against the Soviet rule, which broke out the day the Germans crossed the frontier.

The revolt had been carefully prepared by one of Smetona's henchmen, Colonel Kazys Skirpa, the Lithuanian Minister to Berlin, who in December, 1940, organized the movement of the so-called "Freedom Fighters" with the consent and the assistance of the Nazi authorities. The bulk of Colonel Skirpa's following had been recruited from Lithuanian refugees in Germany, but he also succeeded in building up a strong fifth column on Soviet-Lithuanian



soil. These men seized Kaunas on June 23, 1941, opening its gates to the German armies.

Colonel Skirpa and his "Freedom Fighters" got perhaps what they deserved but certainly not what they expected. Elected Prime Minister by his triumphant followers, Skirpa never even reached Kaunas; he was placed under arrest by his German friends and no more was heard of him.

The "Free Lithuanians" then set up a provisional government headed by one Juozas Ambrazevicius. But Hitler had sent his armies rolling east not to liberate the Lithuanians or anybody else, but to conquer colonies. The Germans never even dreamt of restoring national independence to the Baltic States.

After the proclamation of the Ostland by Hitler, on July 17, 1941 (see page 35), the position of the provisional government became untenable; it resigned on August 5. The "Freedom Fighters" were disbanded by order of Reichskommissar Lohse, and their principal leaders were taken into custody.

In Latvia and Estonia there was not even such a short-lived flare-up of independence. Both countries merely changed hands.

If the Germans had the slightest talent for making themselves popular, the Baltic countries would have been the place to show it. There they really had a chance of winning over to their side a large portion of the population, by the simple device of introducing a regime more tolerant and palatable than the one they had come to end. In Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Soviet regime had not had time to assimilate more than a fraction of the population. Large masses remained unreconciled, ready to welcome any power that would remove the Bolshevik rule.

The Germans missed this golden opportunity. They

treated the "liberated" territories as they have treated all conquered countries from Norway to Greece, and with the same result.

Unbridled terror and a policy of wholesale Germanization, that was the Nazi formula for dealing with the Baltic States. In Riga alone no less than fifty-four central streets were renamed after Nazi leaders or figures of German history. The name of Liberty Boulevard was changed to Adolf Hitler Boulevard; Unity Square became Hindenburg Square; Elisabeth Street was rebaptized Walther von Plettenberg Street after the sixteenth-century Teutonic Knight. Dozens of streets in Tallinn, Kaunas, and Vilna were similarly Germanized.

German economic policy in the Ostland has been, as in Denmark, France, and elsewhere, one of systematic, even scientific, looting. Acting through a special body called the *Wirtschaftskommando*, the occupation authorities took over all property nationalized by the Soviet regime. Only the former belongings of German nationals, whether Reich Germans or Balts, were restored to their dispossessed owners.

In this respect it is interesting to note that only a fraction of the *Volksdeutsche* repatriated after the Soviet occupation were allowed to return to their former homes when the Ostland was set up. Only those who qualified as absolutely reliable from the Nazi point of view were given permission to go back, while all others, including the thousands of pseudo-*Volksdeutsche* from Lithuania, were retained in the Reich.

All other real estate, land, houses, stores, factories and so forth, was seized by the *Wirtschaftskommando* and administered through a holding corporation, the *Deutsche Grundstücks Gesellschaft*. The avowed purpose of this agency was to return to private ownership all property nationalized

under the Soviet regime, but Baltic nationals could qualify as owners only if they accepted service with the German armed forces, police formations, labor battalions, etc., or otherwise rendered service to the occupation authorities.

In many other ways too, the indigenous population was discriminated against by the new rulers. For instance, the rationing system devised for the Ostland was such as to favor the German Balts, and the Reich Germans, at the expense of Estonians, Letts, and Lithuanians. Not only did the Germans reserve extra-large food rations for themselves, but they also had exclusive access to special restaurants serving cheaper and more substantial meals than those open to the general public.

A certain amount of self-government was granted to the Baltic countries early in 1942. In the "General Commissariat" Estonia a five-man State Council headed by one Dr. E. Mae was set up; Latvia was administered by six "general directors" under the leadership of General Dankers; in Lithuania, the former Chief of the General Staff, General Petras Kubiliunas, was installed with a cabinet of seven "general councillors." However, this autonomy was limited everywhere to such matters as education, public health, agriculture, industrial production, and social insurance, with partial responsibility for the maintenance of public order and safety.

Any failure to comply with the orders of the Reichskommissar or one of the General Commissars under him was met with instantaneous and drastic reprisals. Characteristic of the Nazi methods in Ostland is the brutal repression of a minor revolt that broke out in Lithuania in February, 1942.

At the time the Germans, hard-pressed in Russia after their catastrophic defeat at Stalingrad, were busy pressing foreigners into the ranks of the depleted Wehrmacht. When

the results of a "voluntary" recruiting campaign fell far short of expectations, Reichskommissar Lohse decreed general mobilization of all able-bodied men between the ages of 17 and 45 throughout the territory under his jurisdiction. The draftees were organized into so-called SS-legions (attached to the Waffen-SS, a branch of the Wehrmacht under the control of Heinrich Himmler), one each for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. ~~SHOT~~

In an appeal, made public along with the mobilization order, Herr Lohse addressed himself to the Baltic nations in these terms: "To arms! To work! With Adolf Hitler to victory. . . . The struggle has now reached its culmination. Bolshevism threatens to destroy Europe. Thereby your country will be first to perish. Step into the ranks of the Wehrmacht. . . . Victory will save the lives of you and your children, your property, your culture, and the future of your people in your homeland."

While the Latvian and Estonian puppet governments gave unreserved support to this mobilization drive, the Lithuanians stalled in an attempt to trade some political concessions for military assistance. General Commissar von Renteln refused to bargain, and the Lithuanians refused to enlist.

There were demonstrations, strikes, and acts of sabotage. Then the Gestapo Chief Himmler appeared on the scene with the usual drastic consequences. The "General Council" was dissolved and four of its members were arrested. In one Lithuanian district, forty village elders were publicly executed. The universities of Kaunas and Vilna were closed and hundreds of professors and students were arrested. Public libraries and scientific institutions throughout the country were sacked and burned down by the Gestapo.

Perhaps the most senseless and diabolical act of vandal-

ism committed by Himmler's brutes was the destruction, at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences at Vilna, of the manuscript of a Lithuanian dictionary which had taken over forty years to compile. In the same place, they found and destroyed 2,000 records of old Lithuanian folksongs, a priceless collection that cannot be restored. That was the way Himmler, Lohse, and their henchmen proposed to save Lithuanian property and culture from Bolshevism!

The recruitment of Baltic citizens for the SS-legions which the Nazis hoped to further with such stupid acts of barbarism actually backfired at the most critical moment. When the Red armies, in the late fall of 1943, again approached the borders of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, entire units of the SS-legions deserted to the Russian lines or joined partisan formations fighting the Nazis. Thanks to Herr Lohse and his hierarchy of commissars, the Soviet troops, who in 1939 and 1940 had been widely regarded as oppressors, in the Baltic countries, were welcomed back in 1943 as friends and liberators!

No doubt even now many Estonians, Letts, and Lithuanians would much rather regain their lost independence than once again become Soviet citizens. Whether they, or the champions of Baltic autonomy within the framework of the U.S.S.R., express the will of the majority no outside observer can presume to tell with authority.

Theoretically, three solutions of the Baltic problem are possible. We may want to restore the status quo of 1939, 1940, or 1941. For my part, I think that the most equitable solution probably would be establishment of a state of affairs not unlike that existing in 1940, prior to the total occupation.

Such a middle-of-the-road solution, if it could be made to work, would satisfy the national aspirations of all but the

most nationalistic Estonians, Letts, and Lithuanians, while at the same time safeguarding the political and military security of the U.S.S.R.

That the Soviet Union after this war will have a right to demand military control of the Baltic States is self-evident to all sensible and unbiased people. In fact, one might say that possession, at least in a military sense, of Riga, Tallinn, Windau, and of the islands of Dagö and Oesel is as much an indispensable prerequisite to the security of Russia, as Pearl Harbor, Puerto Rico, and Panama are to the security of the United States, and Gibraltar, Malta, and Suez to that of Great Britain.

It is not so easy to concede total absorption of the Baltic countries by the U.S.S.R. without giving the electorate another chance at free and honest elections. This is undoubtedly what most people of liberal views would like to see take place.

Actually, however, there is little chance that the Soviet government will consent to discuss the "Baltic question" at all. Stalin, as I have stated above, has made it abundantly clear that he regards the Baltic countries as integral parts of the U.S.S.R. and covered by its constitution. And the Moscow press has sarcastically suggested that if the Allies wish to discuss the question whether or not the Baltic States shall remain with the U.S.S.R. after this war, the discussion should also include the "question" whether the United States shall be allowed to retain Texas and California.

Thus, if Stalin does not change his mind—and he seldom does—it is hard to see what anyone can do about restoring the Baltic States to any other status than that of early 1941. For, what Stalin says goes in the U.S.S.R. And what the U.S.S.R. says is likely to go in the post-war world.

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## CHAPTER VI

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# How Finland Baited the Russian Bear

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EVEN more than in the case of Poland and the Baltic States, the picture which the average American, or Briton, has formed in his mind of Finland and her relations with Russia is blurred by ignorance of the facts and wishful thinking.

Finland's prestige in the United States has been, for a long time, exceptionally high for a number of reasons, none of which, however, is relevant to foreign policy. Paavo Nurmi's athletic feats, the compositions of Jean Sibelius, Finnish folk-customs, folk-lore, and songs, and above all the fact that Finland alone in an ungrateful Europe paid its war debt to the United States have won the little northern country many admirers and steadfast apologists in America.

But what really interests us here is not whether Finland is picturesque, artistically-minded and honest, but what her role has been in this war. Is she a friend or an enemy? Has she served Hitler or the cause of the United Nations? What is the record of her attitude toward our ally, Russia?

Typical of the fanciful conception which even some highly placed, and one would think, well-informed persons have of Finland's antecedents, is an address given on June 18, 1939, at Helsinki by General Sir Walter Kirke, Inspector-General of the British Home Forces. The European atmos-

phere at the time was fraught with forebodings of imminent war, but in the pure souls of some British brass hats the flower of appeasement had not withered yet. So this is what Sir Walter had to say on the occasion: "Finland has grown up to a very attractive young lady, and the number of suitors who would like to hold her hand is apparently becoming quite embarrassing. But I understand that she thinks the weather is rather too hot for hand-holding, and is in no particular need of a partner for the next dance, which she would prefer to sit out by herself. This aspiration has the fullest sympathy of everyone in Great Britain and no one for one instance would wish to take any action which, in their opinion, would shock her maiden modesty or compromise her virgin status."

General Kirke's gallantry, unfortunately, was greater than his knowledge of European affairs. No one who has ever bothered to scrutinize Finland's past record would feel like vaunting her "maiden modesty" and "virginal status." In point of fact, the Finnish belle, far from being too coy for handholding, has had many foolish affairs and a lifelong liaison with Europe's worst apache, Germany.

Let the facts speak. The Finnish Republic was born in the fourth year of the last war. The first satellite country to break away from the Tsarist Empire to which she had belonged as a semi-autonomous grand-duchy since 1809, Finland declared her independence on December 6, 1917. There followed a bloody civil war in which the "Reds" (Communists, Socialists and a sprinkling of Liberals) fought the "Whites." While the former were entrenched in the principal cities, the latter had their main strongholds in the rural districts of northwestern Finland where the Swedish element predominates. (Since medieval times, the Swedish minority in Finland, about 400,000 strong, or eleven per-



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cent of the total population, has to a large extent controlled the economic life of that country.)

Commander-in-chief of the White Army was Baron Carl Gustav Emil Mannerheim, a scion of the landed Swedish gentry established on the Baltic coast of Finland. Even at school, the baron had learned to hate the Russian overlords and to despise the Finnish underclass of his country. As a youth he spoke nothing but his Swedish mother tongue, although he learned both Russian and Finnish.

Born June 4, 1867, on his wealthy father's estate at Louhisaari, the third of eight children, Mannerheim at fifteen entered the military college at Frederikshamn. There the young Russia-hater learned that his only prospect of a rapid and fruitful career lay in playing ball with the Muscovites who were keeping his homeland in bondage.

So the ambitious cadet became a good Russian and a most loyal subject of the Tsar. He joined the Imperial Guard and before long was promoted to lieutenant in the Nikolaevsky Dragoons.

Rich, smart, and well-bred, the young Swedish-Finnish-Russian careerist easily made his way in the salons and night clubs of St. Petersburg. At the age of thirty, he married the daughter of an influential Russian courtier, Major General Nikolai Arapov. It was not a happy union, however, and in 1903 the couple separated for good.

Mannerheim's first experience at war dates from the Russo-Japanese conflict of 1904-1905. With his regiment of Uhlans, he arrived just in time to see the Battle of Mukden turn into a disastrous rout for the Tsarist Army. In the retreat he distinguished himself so much that he was promoted to colonel. He became a major-general in 1911.

In World War I, Mannerheim, now a lieutenant-general, commanded the Twelfth Russian Cavalry Division which

fought against the Austrians and was thoroughly beaten. All this time, in fact right up to the Revolution, the Swedish-Finnish baron acted more Russian than the Tsar himself. It was not until he found that his Russian career had irretrievably come to an end, that he converted himself into an ardent Finnish patriot. First then, at the age of fifty, did he bother to learn fluently to speak the language of the country whose "liberator" he was to become.

On his return to Finland, late in 1917, Mannerheim gathered around his standard all the reactionary and Russo-phobe elements who were hostile to the establishment of a democratic republic and wished completely to sever all ties with Soviet Russia. Having had little luck in foreign wars, he wanted to try his hands in a civil war.

He fared no better in this easy campaign against a numerically inferior and poorly equipped workers' army. Then Mannerheim, versatile as ever, decided to ask Germany for help, and Kaiser Wilhelm obligingly dispatched an expeditionary corps under the command of General Count Rüdiger von der Goltz. It was through the decisive intervention of these German troops, whom he had battled only a few months before, that Mannerheim was able to win the civil war.

The beautiful friendship which thus began did not last long. The war was barely over when Mannerheim and von der Goltz clashed over the division of the spoils. Chief bone of contention was the Germans' desire to set up Prince Karl Friedrich von Hessen, the Kaiser's brother-in-law, as King of Finland. Mannerheim wanted no kings because he had already set his mind on a personal dictatorship.

When the Prince, over Mannerheim's veto, was "elected" king by the Finnish people (October 5) Mannerheim left the country in a rage to join the Allies. He was now once more as anti-German as he had been up to 1917. It is from

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this personal squabble between the two rivaling generals that the enduring legend of Mannerheim's anti-German and pro-Allied tendencies has sprung.

The King-elect never ascended his throne, for in a short while Germany surrendered and under the armistice was forced to withdraw its armed forces from abroad. In December, Mannerheim returned to Helsinki and proclaimed himself Regent of Finland. One of his first acts was to organize the *Skyddskorps*, or Civic Guards, as a personal instrument of power. This force of about 100,000, mostly former "Whites," has played a tremendous and sinister role in Finnish history between the two World Wars.

The people, crushed and subdued as they were, wanted no part of Mannerheim and at the first opportunity showed him the way out. On June 17, 1919, the Diet proclaimed a republic and adopted a new constitution. Mannerheim ran for president but was defeated and had to yield his place to Kaarlo Juho Ståhlberg. Finland's first constitutional president.

Meanwhile, Mannerheim and his Whites carried on with the brutal extermination of their beaten enemies, the "Reds." Over 30,000 people, including many women and children, were either massacred in cold blood, or left to die from hunger, disease, and exposure in overcrowded jails; 67,000 more lives were ruined through long-term sentences of prison or hard labor.

Thus in the matter of butchering one's own people, Mannerheim can justly claim to have set the example which Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco followed and perfected. And this man, whom the Finnish people call the "Bloody Baron," has been built up for years, even in democratic countries, as a great hero and humanitarian! Some of his panegyrists in America have even gone so far as to portray him as "The Last Knight of Europe."

## THE BACKGROUND OF FINNISH FASCISM

The Finland that emerged from the civil war was far from being a perfect democracy. Outwardly, it is true, the constitution was modern and progressive, but the democratic spirit never quite penetrated the executive and the judiciary.

Labor from the beginning got a raw deal. The Communist Party was banned by law and its newspapers were suppressed (1923). But Social-Democrats and trade-union leaders too, while they did not come under the ban, were frequently imprisoned, kidnaped, and maltreated. Exploitation, misery, and discontent were rife among factory workers and farmhands.

After the comparatively peaceful and decent regime of President K. J. Ståhlberg, the Finnish working class came in for a new spell of oppression and violence when the so-called Lappo movement got under way in 1929.

By that time, Finnish labor had slowly recovered from the disastrous defeat of 1918, and had begun to reassert itself in the cities and in the more advanced rural districts. In the Diet, 59 Social-Democratic and 23 Communist-minded deputies, out of 200, voiced the grievances of the working class, whose living standards were as low as could be found anywhere in Europe.

That was just the right atmosphere to start a Fascist movement, and Vihtori Kosola, a well-to-do landowner from Lappo, in the province of Österbotten, took the lead. Having recruited a large following among the landowners and rich farmers of that predominantly Swedish-populated region, Kosola organized storm-troops on the Fascist and Nazi model who spread terror and havoc throughout the country. A favorite sport of Kosola's "Lappos" was to attack and burn down the offices of trade unions and other workers'

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organizations, and to kidnap and beat up labor leaders—in the summer of 1930 alone over a hundred persons were kidnaped—and generally they behaved like typical Fascists.

The Lappo movement reached its high-water mark on July 7, 1930, when Kosola's hordes, 12,000 strong, marched on Helsinki to impose their law on the frightened government and Diet. Though he obtained compliance with many of his demands—dissolution of the Diet, a renewed and widened ban on the Communist Party, and special legislation against the Socialists—Kosola missed his chance of setting up a full-fledged dictatorship.

When the Lappos two years later made another attempt to seize power, through the so-called Mäntsälä *putsch* of February 27, 1932, the government took action, disbanding their organization.

Kosola died on December 14, 1936, a frustrated man (according to some reports he was poisoned), but the seed of hatred and violence which he had sown survived him and grew. He left behind many fanatical disciples not only among the farmers and the landed gentry but also among the students and the military. The *Skyddskorps*, in particular, was a hotbed of Lappo-Fascism.

One of Kosola's henchmen was General Martti Wallenius who later became one of Mannerheim's top generals in the Russo-Finnish war. Wallenius is the man who organized the kidnaping on October 14, 1930, of former President Ståhlberg. For this outrage he was sentenced to ten months at hard labor, but he was soon set free under a political amnesty.

After the Mäntsälä fiasco, which ended with the arrest of Kosola and Wallenius, the Lappo movement went underground, but it soon emerged again under a new name, *Isänmaallinen Kansan Liike* (I.K.L.), or "Patriotic People's

Movement." It now had at its disposal ample funds provided by the powerful woodpulp and paper industry.

When it comes to assessing the responsibilities for the two Russo-Finnish wars of the past four years, a large portion of the blame must be squarely placed on the shoulders of the Lappo movement and the I.K.L. Despite its numerical unimportance,—at the 1936 elections, the party polled only 98,000 votes and obtained 14 seats in the 200-man Diet—the I.K.L. has constantly wielded a tremendous and pernicious influence, especially within the armed forces.

It has been, from the beginning, Hitler's fifth column in Finland, and its daily paper *Ajan Suunta* has a record of anti-Soviet provocations that goes unmatched anywhere in the world. Every single one of these provocations, naturally, was recorded in Moscow and furnished the Soviet government with something far better than pretexts for the 1939 invasion of Finland.

Like every major Fascist movement in the world, the I.K.L. generated a rat's tail of like-minded and affiliated organizations, among which the most important was the *Akateeminen Karjala Seura*, or Academic Karelian Society (A.K.S.), the spearhead of Finnish irredentism.

Raving about a "Greater Finland" that would comprise all Fins and racially allied tribes (Lapps, Karelians), the A.K.S. aimed at the annexation of not only Russian, but also Swedish and Norwegian territory. Soviet Karelia, Leningrad with its hinterland, Kola peninsula, Arkhangelsk and surrounding areas, plus Sweden's Tornio Valley and the Norwegian Province of Finmark, these were the minimum demands of the I.K.L. and A.K.S. The extremists dreamt of seizing all of Northern Russia right up to the Urals and beyond.

Shortly before the war it was estimated that between sixty and seventy percent of all Finnish students belonged

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to one or the other of these irredentist organizations. Members of the A.K.S. used to pledge themselves in the best Nazi style to the "Greater Finland" cause, with solemn oaths of loyalty to their leaders and terrible vows of vengeance to traitors.

The close and permanent connection between I.K.L. and A.K.S., on one hand, and Nazi Germany, on the other, has been frequently exposed in the democratic press of Finland and Sweden, but never more strikingly than in the case of an abortive *putsch* that occurred in Estonia in December, 1935. At the trial of the rebels—a Fascist organization called WABS—in August, 1936, it was revealed that arms, money, and instructions had been transmitted to them through the I.K.L. and its youth organization *Sini-musta*, or Blue Shirts. Principal organizer of the *putsch* was the Finnish Colonel Somersalo, a prominent member of the I.K.L. who had been specially trained at a Nazi school for fifth columnists.

### FINLAND'S "NORTHERN ORIENTATION"

The Finns are not Scandinavians, as is sometimes erroneously believed. Racially and linguistically they are poles apart from the Scandinavian group of nations. Their closest relatives in Europe, besides the Karelians and Lapps, are the Estonians.

Geographically, economically, and culturally, however, Finland has been for centuries associated with the Scandinavian states. In the twelfth century, Swedish warriors conquered Finland, turning it into a dependency. The imprint which this Swedish invasion left on the neighbor country across the Gulf of Bothnia is still strongly noticeable to this day.

So strong is this Swedish strain in Finland's life that it was hardly affected at all by more than a hundred years of

Russian suzerainty. Throughout the period from 1809 to 1917, during which Finland belonged to the Tsars, the Swedish upper class never relinquished their hold on Finland's economical and financial life while the Russians controlled it politically and militarily.

Relations between these two national components of Finland, the Finnish majority, nine times as numerous as the Swedes, but much poorer and less educated, and the small but powerful minority of Swedo-Finns, were often strained. After the establishment of the Finnish Republic, Swedish influence and wealth were greatly reduced by a determined offensive of "genuine-Finnish" elements. In 1935, feelings ran so high in a bitter contest for control of Helsinki University that Swedo-Finnish students were attacked and mauled by their "genuine-Finnish" colleagues and Swedish flags were torn down and burned in the market.

After a while, however, the two nationalities composed their differences and in the international field too the relations between Finland and Sweden improved. That was the time when Europe's small nations attempted to build their security on regional agreements within the framework of the League of Nations. For Finland, it was a natural thing to join the Scandinavian trio which thus became the "Nordic Quartet."

Beginning toward the end of 1935 and lasting until the end of 1939, this "Northern orientation" had a very wholesome, if passing, influence on Finnish affairs. Following the lead of the socially advanced and politically mature Scandinavian countries, Finland in those years embarked on a policy of neutrality, democracy, and social reforms.

Only in this short span of five years did Finland share the high social and political stability, and the economic prosperity, of the Scandinavian countries. As in these, the



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Finnish Labor Party scored, in 1936, a smashing electoral triumph, polling 452,000 votes and winning 83 seats in the Diet.

But even in this, the most democratic period in Finnish history, some of the elementary rules of representative government were ignored or outright violated. For instance, during the entire term of President Pehr Ehvind Svinhufvud (1931-1937) the numerically strong Labor Party was kept out of even minor posts in the administration. Svinhufvud (this Swedish name means, oddly, "pig-head") refused to appoint a Labor cabinet, or a single Labor minister, even after the party in 1936 had become the strongest group in the Diet. It was not until the Agrarian party leader Kyösti Kallio had taken office in February, 1937, that the Finnish Social-Democrats were given their constitutional share of government responsibility.

However, even though all the rules of the democratic game were not observed, Finland in those five years did come fairly close to becoming a model country, at least in domestic affairs. Unemployment was gradually reduced to zero; industry, agriculture, and foreign trade had boom times; and the banks were overflowing with cash. Like the neighboring Scandinavian countries, Finland became a favorite haunt of British and American tourists who invariably went home full of enthusiasm and praise. In America, Finland, the honest debtor who was willing and able to pay his debts, acquired a unique prestige which has not yet completely worn off.

As the popular standard of living rose, the class differences became less acute and the old hatreds were almost forgotten. People began to talk of a nation-wide reconciliation of "Whites" and "Reds." Some labor leaders, gratified by several political amnesties, could be heard saying, "The Finnish workers have granted amnesty to Mannerheim."

## THE NAZI-FINNISH CONSPIRACY

During those years of good democratic standing, Mannerheim and his followers kept in the background, biding their time. As Commander-in-chief of Finland's armed forces and of the Civic Guards, Marshal Mannerheim (he was given this rank on May 19, 1933) still was potentially more powerful than any of the politicians who had foiled his presidential ambitions.

It is hardly surprising that a man of Mannerheim's bloody past and despotic character should have followed Hitler's rise to power with admiration and envy. For years before the present war, Mannerheim had actively and consistently championed the cause of Nazism both at home and abroad, yet at the same time he managed to keep his "pro-British" and "pro-democratic" reputation.

This myth, carefully nurtured in the era of appeasement, has found exceptionally many and stout-hearted believers in the United States and Great Britain. It never had any other foundation in fact than the above-mentioned strictly personal tiff between Mannerheim and *one* German, General von der Goltz.

Under the leadership of the "pro-British" Mannerheim, the Finnish Army became an instrument imbued with the traditions of Prussia and with the spirit of Nazism alike, to the point of being practically indistinguishable from the Wehrmacht. In 1939, competent observers estimated that at least nine out of ten Finnish officers were pro-German and nearly all of them pro-Nazi as well.

The Finnish High Command was made up of generals who had received their military training in Germany. With the exception of the Tsarist protégé Mannerheim, and perhaps one or two others, every single top commander in the

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Finnish Army, Navy, and Air Force had won his military spurs in the last war as a volunteer in the German Army, most of them in the 27th Prussian *Jäger* Battalion.

Prominent among these German-trained and Nazi-minded military leaders were: the Chief of the General Staff, Major General Karl Lennart Oesch; the former Commanding General, Lieutenant General Hugo Viktor Oesterman; General Martti Wallenius, commander of the Northern Army; Major General Harald Oehquist, who was in charge of the Viborg front in the winter war of 1939-1940; Major General Kaarlo Lauri Torvald Malmberg, commander of the Civic Guards; Major General Väinö Lahja Rikhard Valve of the air force; and many others.

Germany's military and political grip on Finland antedates the Nazi regime, since it goes back to the days of the von der Goltz expedition, but it was Hitler who perfected it and turned it into a vital factor in his aggressive designs against the Soviet Union. Years before the present war, the Nazis had minutely prepared Finland as a jumping-off ground for the two drives upon Leningrad and Murmansk.

The German and Finnish armies fraternized and conspired continuously. One week a delegation of the *Jäger* veterans or of the *Skyddskorps* was feted in Germany; the next a group of Nazi officers would go on a tour of inspection through Finland—preferably in the border districts. Indeed, I happen to know that in 1937 not only German and Italian, but also Japanese officers inspected the Finnish fortifications on the Karelian isthmus, on a personal invitation from Mannerheim.

German engineers helped build the Mannerheim Line, laid out and erected the chain of forty large air bases along the Karelian border from which the German and Finnish airmen have operated against Murmansk and Soviet Karelia,

and sunk American ships in the Arctic Ocean. German instructors trained and secretly led the Finnish Air Force, turning it into a faithful copy of the Luftwaffe.

Perhaps more than any other branch of Finland's armed forces, the Navy was a hotbed of Fascism. When a Finnish flotilla, in August, 1935, visited Kiel, the German press enthusiastically described the interior decoration of the flagship "Väinömoinen"; she was draped all over with swastikas and portraits of Der Führer. And, the Nazi reporters pointed out, this was not just done for the occasion—no, the warships of "democratic" little Finland were in the habit of carrying the symbols of Nazism.

During the years 1935-1937, in particular, German officers and Gestapo agents developed a feverish activity in Finland, openly preaching a holy crusade against the Soviet Union. It may seem paradoxical that these preparations for aggression should have reached a pitch precisely in the period which I have described above as being the most "democratic" in Finnish history. The simple truth is that in those years Finland's left hand did not know what the right hand was up to—or at least did not care. Mannerheim was virtually autonomous in the military field, and he never allowed the democratic leaders to interfere with the measures he deemed necessary for the "security" of the state.

It goes without saying that Moscow was neither blind nor deaf to the German military and political maneuvers in Finnish soil. On more than one occasion, the Soviet press told the Finns bluntly that they were playing with fire. On November 29, 1936, Andrei Zhdanov, who was then Communist Party leader for the Leningrad district, delivered a sharp warning to the Finnish warmongers. In an address to the All-Union Congress of the U.S.S.R., Zhdanov said: "We in Leningrad are sitting at one of the windows to the

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outside world. Around us, there are a number of small countries that dream of great adventures, or permit great adventurers to operate from their territories. Finland, for example, fans the flames of anti-Soviet hatred and proffers herself as a jumping-off place for Fascism. *In the end, Finland and other small nations like her will be the losers. We do not, of course, fear them, but if they don't mind their own business, we may be forced to open up our window a little more, and it will be just too bad for them.*" [My italics]

That was a fair warning which the Finns chose to disregard. The Finnish press, to be sure, got very excited about Zhdanov's speech, denying his allegations and rejecting his threats. But nothing was done to improve relations with Russia. Mannerheim and his clique went on hobnobbing with the Nazis as before.

Several times the Soviet press openly charged that Finland had leased certain portions of her national territory to the Germans in preparation of an attack on the U.S.S.R. In August, 1937, the Moscow *Izvestia* asserted that the Germans had asked for twenty naval and air bases to be set up on Finland's Arctic coast, camouflaged as "fishing concessions." (Some such bases actually were granted a few months later, this writer learned at the time from a well-informed Scandinavian source; a German submarine and air base also was clandestinely set up on the "demilitarized" Aaland Islands in the Gulf of Bothnia.)

Right up to the sudden conclusion of the Nazi-Soviet pact, the German and Finnish militarists continued to fraternize and to plot against Russia. In June, 1939, a delegation of 200 *Jäger* veterans attended the "Reichskriegertag" at Kassel and paraded before Hitler. At the banquet, the Finnish-German "comradeship-in-arms" was toasted.

On June 29, 1939, the Chief of the German General Staff,

General Franz Halder, visited Helsinki and was received like a king. He inspected the Mannerheim Line and strategic centers in Northern Finland. On his departure, he was given Finland's highest decoration, the Grand Cross of the White Rose.

#### THE CHICKENS COME HOME TO ROOST

Considering Finland's role up to August, 1939, and again what happened in June, 1941, an impartial observer will have to admit that Russia's invasion of Finland on the morning of November 30, 1939, was as justified as any preventive war can be.

At the time, of course, things didn't look that way. All good democrats, this writer not excepted, were loudly indignant over the "odious Bolshevik aggression." The principal cause of this universal condemnation was the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 24 which Liberals the world over found too much to stomach. It had alienated nearly all friends of the Soviet Union except Communist Party members or fellow-travelers through thick or thin. Seeing Stalin politically aligned with the arch-enemy Hitler, even those who had formerly opposed the Russia-hating diehards chimed in with the general chorus of indignation.

Other contributing factors were the condemnation on principle of all acts of violence, whether of a preventive or an aggressive nature, and the undeniable likeness of Soviet and Nazi methods in the pursuit of foreign political aims.

I have already pointed out that the annexation in three phases of the Baltic countries was very much patterned on examples earlier set by Hitler and Mussolini. The invasion of Finland, which was sandwiched between the partial and total occupation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, also followed the totalitarian pattern.

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Early in September, 1939, the Kremlin invited the Finnish government to send a delegation to Moscow for discussion of certain unspecified points. It was, of course, the kind of "invitation" Hitler used to send out, asking foreign statesmen to come and see him at Berchtesgaden.

The Finns, who prided themselves on *sisu* (stamina), held out for a while. Foreign Minister at the time was Eljas Erkkö, editor of the pro-German *Helsingin Sanomat*, Finland's biggest and most influential newspaper, and a "Liberal." Erkkö doggedly refused to take the road to Moscow and he was backed in this by the weak and professorial Premier Aimo Cajander.

Eventually the Helsinki government yielded to the unrelenting pressure from Moscow and sent off a delegation headed by Dr. Juho Kusti Paasikivi, who then was Finnish Minister to Stockholm. That was a clever choice, for Paasikivi was known as an able and moderate negotiator with considerable experience in handling the Bolsheviks; he had headed the Finnish delegation which negotiated the Peace of Dorpat (October 14, 1920) which ended hostilities with Russia after the last war.

The job Dr. Paasikivi shouldered would have been a hard one in any event, for the Finnish government never envisaged fulfilling more than a fraction of the Russian demands which aimed at both territorial concessions and political guarantees. It was made doubly difficult by Paasikivi's status, for the masters of the Kremlin, who had become accustomed to playing host to the world's foreign ministers, deeply resented the fact that little Finland did not send its foreign minister, or any other cabinet members for that matter.

On and off, the Russo-Finnish parleys dragged on for more than a month without making headway. All along the Finnish public and the world at large were kept in total

ignorance of the terms under consideration. It was not until after the outbreak of hostilities that the Soviet demands on Finland were made public, although they had been formulated as early as October 14. They were in the main as follows: (a) Finland was to lease to Russia, for a period of thirty years, the deep, virtually icefree, and strongly protected harbor of Hangö and to permit the establishment of a Red naval base there, garrisoned by 5,000 men; (b) Soviet naval forces also were to be given the privilege of using the port of Lappvik near Hangö; (c) the small but strategic islands of Hogland, Löviskär, Tyttaskär, Seitskär, and Björkö in the Gulf of Finland were to be ceded to Russia, along with a strip of land on the Karelian isthmus, and another on Rybachi Peninsula in the Arctic, altogether some 2,761 square kilometers of Finnish territory; (d) in return for these concessions, Russia offered to cede to Finland an area of 5,529 square kilometers in the districts of Repola and Pojärvi in Eastern Karelia; (e) the two parties were to supplement their non-aggression pact of 1932 with an agreement binding them not to enter into any treaty with a third power that might be directed against the other party; (f) Finland and Russia were both to dismantle their fortifications in the Karelian isthmus; (g) the Soviet Union promised to withdraw its earlier veto against fortification of the Aaland Islands, provided no third power, not even Sweden, took part in these defense works.

These were far-reaching and, at least in some respects, onerous terms, yet in the light of subsequent developments one can no longer call them unjustified. Clearly the Russians were out not for territorial gains, but to get security against aggression. The islands, harbors, and the rest of the territories demanded by them were to buttress the Soviet defense system and to be denied to the potential enemy as springboards of attack. In particular, the Russian demands



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were geared to the safety of Leningrad, Russia's second largest city, whose central parts actually lay within artillery range of the Mannerheim Line.

It should also be noted that the terms offered by Moscow carried a generous compensation for the territorial cessions asked of Finland. In fact, the Russians were prepared to give away twice as much land as they were going to get. It is true that Eastern Karelia, where the Finns were offered territorial compensation, is mostly wild and barren country; but the Karelian isthmus and Rybachi peninsula aren't much better.

Paasikivi probably wanted to avoid war at almost any price. But the chauvinists and pseudo-liberals in the Finnish government were not prepared to make any substantial concessions. Heartened by vague Swedish assurances of solidarity—on October 18, the three Scandinavian monarchs had met with Finland's President Kallio at Stockholm in a more showy than effective demonstration—and perhaps still relying on Germany's aid, Cajander, Erkko, and Väinö Tanner (leader of the Labor Party and of the cooperative movement) thought they could brave the powerful Russian neighbor.

Paasikivi's hands were tied throughout by his instructions from Helsinki and when, in the midst of the negotiations, Mr. Tanner, then Minister of Finance, joined him at the head of the delegation, matters went from bad to worse. In fact, Tanner, who headed the Right wing of the Labor party, turned out to be more intransigent than most of his conservative colleagues in the Cabinet.

By mid-November the Moscow talks had reached a deadlock and the Finnish delegation went home. On the return trip, Tanner, receiving the press at Viborg, made a most surprising statement about the conference that had just broken down. "The atmosphere in Moscow," he told the

reporters, "was not only friendly throughout, but often outright playful."

To illustrate his point, Tanner related a few episodes which, while they are characteristic of Stalin's peculiar form of humor, hardly seemed to justify the Finns' optimism.

On one occasion, Paasikivi, having learned the Kremlin's proposals for a settlement, declared with a worried look on his face, "If we brought back to Helsinki such terms as these, there would be no crowds to sing and cheer as when we left."

To this, Stalin, who had been "prowling about the room like a huge cat," replied, "Don't worry,—Molotov, Potemkin, and I will come to sing and cheer for you!"

And once, as the experts were hotly arguing back and forth about the suggested removal of the Finnish frontier on the Karelian isthmus from the vicinity of Leningrad, Stalin, according to Tanner, drew a pencil from his breast-pocket, leaned across the table, and casually drew a line on the map, "I say, gentlemen, you wouldn't mind giving us a tiny strip like this, would you?"

But for all this "playfulness," there was tragedy in the making. After the Finns had left Moscow, events began to move swiftly. A vicious attack on the Finnish Premier Cajander which appeared in the Moscow *Pravda* was followed shortly by the inevitable "frontier incident," in which, according to Moscow, four Red Army men were killed, and nine wounded.

A few hours later, the Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov handed the Finnish Minister in Moscow, Baron Yrjö Koskinen, a virtual ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of the Finnish troops on the Karelian isthmus twelve to fifteen miles to the rear. Helsinki refused to comply and war broke out at dawn November 30, 1939.

Hostilities started with a heavy bombardment of Helsinki

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in which forty people were killed and hundreds injured. Under the impact of these events, the Cabinet of Premier Cajander resigned that night, apparently in a belated attempt to placate Moscow. However, the names of the new Premier and Foreign Minister were hardly apt to inspire much confidence in the Kremlin. They were, respectively, Risto Ryti, former governor of the Bank of Finland, and Väinö Tanner.

Immediately following the outbreak of war, the Soviet government recognized a so-called "People's Government of the Finnish Democratic Republic" which was set up by a handful of Finnish Communists at the Terijoki seaside resort on the Karelian isthmus.

Head of this puppet government—it never was anything else—became Otto Wilhelm Kuusinen, fifty-eight-year-old Left-wing leader of the Finnish Labor Party, who had fled the country in 1918, during the Mannerheim terror. Although he had secretly returned to Finland once or twice—with a price of 50,000 finnmarks on his head—Kuusinen had, in this long exile, lost all contact with the Finnish people. All those years, he had lived in Moscow where he held an important post in the executive committee of the Comintern. His special task in those years had been to supervise Communist activities in Northern Europe.

Kuusinen's tailor-made government promptly fulfilled its purpose by signing a pact of peace and mutual assistance with Moscow. This treaty gave the Russians all they had asked for—on paper. It was agreed that the formal signature should take place after Kuusinen's triumphant entry into the Finnish capital. He never got there, though.

For, in the meantime, military operations had taken an unexpected turn. The small, but well-trained and exceedingly well-equipped Finnish Army—it was able to draw freely on the first-rate products of the great Swedish muni-

tions industry—fought bravely and stubbornly against the numerically far superior Red Army. It scored a number of spectacular victories, at Tolvajärvi, Suomussalmi, Salla, and other places, winning the demonstrative applause of almost the entire world.

In retrospect, it appears certain that the initial Russian reverses of the first two months of the 1939-1940 winter war were due to lack of preparation and poor organization as much as to Finnish prowess. The campaign demonstrated again what people who knew Russia had long suspected: that the Red Army is not an instrument particularly well suited for *offensive* warfare.

Conversely, the present war has shown in even more impressive fashion that the Russians are the best fighters in the world when it comes to defending their home soil against aggression. This experience should give comfort to those who still nourish fears of an uncontrollable Soviet military expansion after this war.

Moreover, the Russians made two serious mistakes at the outset of the Finnish campaign: they selected for some of their major thrusts the wayless, rugged wasteland of Eastern Karelia; and they failed to make immediate use of their best troops against an enemy whom the Kremlin was wrong to underrate in a military sense.

Indeed, the first Soviet columns that invaded Finland, especially in the Far North, were anything but crack troops. Poorly clad and equipped, and badly led, these soldiers were no match for the excellently provided-for, swift-moving Finns, a nation of athletes and marksmen. Furthermore the Finns knew every inch of the difficult terrain on which they fought and they had far better equipment to brave the blinding blizzards and waist-deep snow of Karelia.

This spectacle of a handful of Finns driving Stalin's dread legions before them inspired some American report-

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ers with more picturesque than accurate descriptions of Russia's military strength. Leland Stowe in the *Chicago Daily News* described Russian prisoners as "the most miserable-looking creatures to be seen in uniform in this part of Europe since Napoleon's half-starved soldiers straggled back from Moscow."

After their initial setbacks, however, the Russians rallied and, throwing crack troops from Siberia into the battle, they gained the upper hand with comparative ease.

In the last days of February, 1940, the Red Army, now well-equipped with heavy artillery, tanks, planes, and armored sledges, launched a terrific frontal assault on the Mannerheim Line. After a clean breakthrough, the Russians captured Viipuri (Viborg), Finland's third largest city and strongest place in the east.

The capture of Viipuri proved a fatal blow to the Finns, who had previously lost their Arctic seaport of Petsamo and other important towns. It now was clear that the Finnish Army would not be able to stem the Red tide which threatened to engulf the entire country in a few weeks.

In this predicament, German diplomatic intervention saved Finland from a total collapse. Hitler, with the anti-Soviet crusade still at the back of his mind, could ill afford to lose the Finnish springboard. With Swedish assistance, the two belligerents were brought together at a conference table.

I doubt that the hard-boiled Russians had any illusions about the real motives underlying Germany's peace-making efforts. But Russia, still anxious to avoid the ultimate test as long as possible, could not afford to be intransigent in the face of strong Nazi pressure; besides, the Finnish campaign had proved unexpectedly bloody and costly. So the Kremlin yielded, and after a short negotiation a peace treaty was signed at Moscow on March 12, 1940.

The terms imposed on Finland were harder than those she might have obtained through a peaceful settlement, but they were not exorbitant. Finland ceded to Russia: (1) the Karelian isthmus, including Viipuri; (2) the Finnish shore line of Lake Ladoga; (3) a strip of land in the Arctic, including the Rybachi peninsula; (4) the islands of Hogland, Lövkär, Tyttaskär, Seitskär and Björkö in the Gulf of Finland. In addition, the Soviet obtained a thirty-year lease on the port of Hangö and its immediate hinterland, transit privileges across Petsamo, and the right to build a railroad line across Northern Finland for strategical purposes.

Altogether the Finns were forced to give up about ten percent of their national territory, with a population of 450,000. Most of these, however, preferred resettlement in other parts of Finland to Soviet rule.

#### BETWEEN TWO WARS

For Finland too, the three months' winter war had been costly: more than 20,000 were dead, twice that number were wounded, many more thousands were missing. Besides, new work and new homes had to be found for the hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Soviet-occupied territories. And the country's formerly well-ordered economy had been thrown out of gear by the war.

Under these circumstances, it would have been wise statesmanship to bury the dead, restore the ruined cities, and build a new life on a program of work and peace. But Mannerheim and his clique of Nazified officers never regarded the post-war period as anything but an armistice to be used for new provocations and to prepare for an early resumption of hostilities. Unfortunately Premier Ryti and his government followed Mannerheim's lead. The ink was not dry on the Treaty of Moscow before the Finns began

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systematically to plan for a war of revenge against the Soviet Union.

There were, it is true, a number of sensible people who opposed this senseless policy. In May, 1940, a group of Left-wing Socialists and Liberals under the leadership of Dr. Mauri Ryömä founded the "Society for Peace and Friendship with the Soviet Union," a name that epitomized a program.

The society became, from the start, the *bête noire* of the Ryti government. Its meetings were dissolved by the police, its members frequently beaten up and arrested. In July, the chairman of the society, Ryömä, and his deputy, Lauri David Vilenius, were jailed on a charge of high treason; Ryömä later was sentenced to seven years imprisonment.

Meanwhile, Hitler's panzer armies had raced from triumph to triumph in northern and western Europe. With each of these victories it became plainer that, having conquered the West, the Nazis would turn east for their final, decisive assault on the Soviet state, the most formidable single obstacle to the Führer's dream of world domination.

Needless to say, the Finnish generals, with their Prussian training and Nazi mentality, were jubilant. When they noticed, moreover, that the Nazis already were preparing on the sly for the invasion of Russia, they hastened once more to hitch their little chariot to the Führer's star.

Although Mannerheim and his gang only a few months earlier had been incensed by Germany's failure to aid Finland beat off the Russian invasion of December, 1939, and even had solicited armed help from the Allies—a scheme that, thank Heaven, fell through as Sweden and Norway refused to grant passage—they were only too glad now to let bygones be bygones and reform the old alliance in a spirit of common aggression.

The democratic world was "surprised"—it usually is when the most easily foreseen events come to pass—when Germany and Finland, on September 24, 1940, concluded a "transit agreement," which in practice amounted to a permission for Nazi troops to occupy Finland and turn it into a base of attack.

It is true that Sweden, a few months earlier, also had authorized the passage of German troops and war materials across her territory, but this transit agreement, inadmissible as it was under international law, did not go nearly as far as the subsequent Finnish-German arrangement.

Even before the agreement was signed, German troops began to pour into Finland's principal ports on the Gulf of Bothnia: Turku, Vaasa, Oulu, Kemi, and Tornio; German engineers went to work on the strategic highway that links the gulf and the Arctic Ocean by way of Rovaniemi.

Ostensibly in transit to northern Norway, these troops, once on Finnish soil, fanned out and made themselves at home at points near the Russian border, with the full approval and assistance of the Finnish authorities. This "peaceful penetration" continued throughout the winter of 1940-1941 and the following spring. In one week in May, 1941, an entire German division, complete with armored cars, tanks, and other heavy equipment, disembarked at the port of Turku.

Military movements of such size could not, of course, be kept wholly secret. This writer, for one, gave a detailed account of the Finnish-German preparations of war against Russia in an article that happened to come out in *The Nation* the very day the Nazi war machine and its Finnish accessory went into action, June 21, 1941. At the time, curiously, not only the Finnish but also the Soviet press branded all talk of an imminent Nazi invasion of Russia as idle chatter and falsehood.



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Developments on the Finnish home front kept pace with the frenzied military preparations. Late in 1940, all the irredentist, pro-Nazi, and anti-Soviet groups in the country joined hands: Mannerheim, Ryti, Erkko, Tanner, all got together with the I.K.L. fanatics and the chauvinists of the Academic Karelian Society in a solid front of aggression.

By May, 1941, Mannerheim's plans had progressed so far that the Finnish government found it advisable to seek a direct contact with Stockholm on the question of Sweden's stand in the coming war. That was the reason for the Swedish Foreign Minister's visit to Helsinki on May 6, for which all sorts of pretexts were given. Apparently Christian Günther attempted to dissuade his Finnish colleagues from the gamble upon which they were about to embark, but it seems certain that he promised Swedish material aid should Finland find herself at war "against her will."

On Günther's return to Stockholm, the Foreign Relations Committee of the Swedish Riksdag was hurriedly convened in secret session—a sure harbinger of trouble in Northern Europe. On June 9, the committee met again and was told by the Foreign Minister that the outbreak of war between Germany and Russia was imminent and that Finland would join the fight as Hitler's ally.

### ENEMY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

It is difficult, in the face of such evidence, to accept the Finnish claims that their country was drawn into this conflict against its will, and that Russia was the aggressor.

Adolf Hitler, in his declaration of war on Russia, proclaimed, "Together with the Finns, we stand from Narvik to the Carpathians." But only on June 27, after five days of heavy fighting, did Finland's President Ryti announce that his country was going to war alongside of Germany and her "leader of genius, Reichschancellor Adolf Hitler." On the

following day, the Finnish Legation in Washington, in a statement purporting to show that Finland was taking up arms in self-defense, declared: "Russia has engaged in subversive *fifth column* activities in Finland. . . . Finland has continued her efforts toward collaboration with her *totalitarian* giant neighbor. . . . Finland still stands as a bulwark of *freedom and democracy* against the murderous aggression of a totalitarian giant which has enslaved nearly 200,000,000 people." [My italics]

At the time, not a few people in the United States were taken in by this strange invocation of democratic ideals by a nation aligned with Hitler and Mussolini. Even many of those who disapproved of Finland's war on Russia would not admit that she did so in a spirit of irredentism and of imperialist ambitions. Yet we have Mannerheim's own word to go by; in an order of the day, issued July 10, 1941, the Marshal candidly admitted that he had been incessantly working for war and that his goal was one of conquest: "In the War of Independence of 1918 I declared to the Finnish Karelians on the other side of our frontier that I would not sheathe my sword until Finland and Eastern Karelia were free. . . . For 23 years Viena and Aunus [Finnish names for two Soviet provinces] have waited for the fulfilment of this promise."

The British were not fooled long by Finland's claim that she was no Axis partner, but was fighting a private, defensive war. Even one week before the outbreak of war in Russia, the British government suspended all "navicerts" for shipping to and from Petsamo, thereby indicating that it no longer regarded Finland as a free country; three Finnish ships were intercepted and detained by the British Navy.

In mid-August, as a result of some prodding from Moscow, Britain formally severed relations with Finland, but

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unofficially the Finnish Minister to London remained at his post. The British still were hoping to avoid a declaration of war against an old friend and they gave some credence to the Finnish declarations that their country wanted only to get the old boundary back and would stop fighting when it was reached.

The Finnish armies never heeded that promise, penetrating deep into Soviet territory in the wake of Hitler's blitzkrieg. Repeated warnings from London fell on deaf ears.

On September 17, a Finnish delegation, headed by Tanner, arrived in Berlin, ostensibly to discuss "exchange and transit problems." It is worthy of note that the "Socialist" Tanner on this occasion did not hesitate to pose for a picture showing him hobnobbing with the German Economics Minister Funk and other highranking Nazis. On the return trip, Tanner told reporters in Stockholm, "Finland will not make a separate peace with Russia's present ruler."

That was the Finnish answer to the persistent efforts made in the meantime by British and American diplomats with a view to breaking the Nazi-Finnish alliance. On October 7, Helsinki rejected another British note, sent on September 22, warning the Finnish government to refrain from any further aggressive action against Russia.

A few weeks later, on November 25, Finland signed the so-called anti-Comintern pact of the Axis. And on December 6, both Ryti and Mannerheim, in their Independence Day speeches, once more rejected all suggestions of a separate peace. The next morning, only a few hours before the Japanese assault on Pearl Harbor brought America into the conflict, the British government declared war on Finland.

The war against Russia didn't turn out to be the push-over, yielding rich and easy booty, on which Hitler and

Mannerheim had counted. Stalled before Leningrad, in the trackless mountains of Karelia and in the tundra outside Murmansk, the Finnish Army, in two and a half years of fighting, suffered 300,000 to 400,000 casualties in killed, wounded, or missing.

Contrary to official Finnish assertions, Finnish troops fought not only in Karelia, but also far from home, in the Ukraine, in the Great Bend of the Don, and before Stalin-grad. Throughout 1941 and the better part of 1942, the Finnish Army fought an offensive war, but in the past year or so it has been on the defensive, with little more than skirmishes being fought on the Finnish front.

Meanwhile, with every month of the hopeless war that went by, misery and unrest grew at home in Finland. Since the end of 1942, the Finnish people have been mostly living in unheated homes and their diet has been reduced to starvation levels. From that same time a general war weariness developed in Finland which Ryti and Mannerheim fought with police measures. In the fall of 1942, in particular, mass arrests of people suspected of Allied sympathies took place throughout Finland.

While the people went hungry and cried for peace, the Finnish leaders continued to fraternize with the Nazi bigwigs.

On June 4, 1942, Hitler, accompanied by his Chief of Staff, Marshal Keitel, and other Nazi generals flew to Helsinki to help Mannerheim celebrate his seventy-fifth birthday. Two days later, the Finnish Information Bureau in New York sent out a release which quoted Mannerheim as assuring Hitler that "the beautiful gift of honor would perpetuate in him the memory of the hard fight of the moment for the highest values of spiritual and material civilization, a fight which we have the privilege of waging by the side of the German Army. . . . *I shall conclude the*

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*expression of my respectful gratitude with the hope that good arms and a just cause may be vouchsafed within this year to render harmless the plague-nest of Bolshevik barbarism."* [My italics]

Well, that year went by, and the next as well, and the only barbarians that are in the way of being rendered harmless are the bosom-friends of Ryti and Mannerheim. . . .

Up to the moment of writing, the United States has not yet followed Britain's example and declared war on Finland, despite the fact that Finnish airmen have sunk American ships and that the Finns for two and a half years have fought against our Russian ally.

This long-suffering equanimity is the more remarkable as the highest men in the Finnish government in December, 1942, committed an act of anti-American provocation without precedent in the annals of diplomacy. The day was December 8—Pearl Harbor Day to the Japanese—and the locale was the Japanese Legation at Helsinki. The Minister was giving a party in honor of "the day that will live in infamy." Prominent among those present were the Finnish Prime Minister Johan Wilhelm Rangell and Foreign Minister Rolf Johan Witting.

After the banquet, a newsreel of the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor was shown in the main reception hall of the legation. Stormy applause greeted the pictures showing the Japanese bombers wreaking havoc on the American Fleet. At the end, the Finnish Premier and Foreign Minister, who had joined in the demonstration, expressed their hopes that the Japanese soon might sink the rest of the U. S. Navy!

Washington reacted to this unheard-of affront merely by recalling Minister H. F. Arthur Schoenfeld "for consultation," but the affair, which caused more excitement in Finland than in this country, eventually led to the downfall of the Rangell Cabinet. On March 5, 1943, a new govern-

ment was formed with Professor Edwin J. Linkomies, publisher of the rabidly anti-Soviet daily *Uusi Suomi* as Premier, and Sir Henrik Ramsay, a wealthy shipowner of Scottish descent, as Foreign Minister.

The new government, in which Väinö Tanner as Minister of Finance continues to play a leading role, introduced no changes in Finland's foreign policy. It turned down two or three more friendly attempts made by the American government with a view to taking Finland out of the war while there still is time. As a result, all but a skeleton staff of the American Legation in Helsinki has been withdrawn.

Now that the game is up, and Finland faces total disaster, the Finnish leaders are trying frantically to escape the inevitable consequences of their blunders and misdeeds. Their only hope now is that the United States, which they have consistently spurned and defied in the past, will come to their rescue in the hour of supreme need.

Finnish endeavors to regain Washington's good will have been almost pathetic. On October 14, 1943, the Finnish Minister in Washington, Hjalmar J. Procope, signed an agreement under which the Finnish Treasury will resume payments on its World War I debt—suspended in 1941 and 1942—and settle the arrears. The move rather obviously tended to establish an American financial interest in the future of Finland as an independent state.

That future, at the present moment, looks somewhat doubtful. What to do with Finland after this war is primarily Russia's concern, not Britain's or ours. Certainly Russia, having lost tens of thousands of her sons as a result of Mannerheim's twenty-five years of warmongering, and suffered heavily at the hands of the Finnish occupants of Karelia, is not in a lenient mood.

While the Kremlin has not thus far revealed its intentions as far as Finland is concerned, we may take it for

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granted that Russia's *minimum* demands will aim at the restoration of the 1941 status quo. Furthermore, the Russians undoubtedly will insist on the formation of a government that offers full guarantees against any repetition of past errors.

There is no indication as yet that Russia aims at the liquidation of Finland as an independent state. Stalin has not in any of his speeches included Finland among the Soviet territories to be liberated by the Red Army. But he doubtless will want to make sure that Finland never again can become the satellite of a great power hostile to the Soviet Union. And it is also known that Moscow frowns on the plan to include Finland in a post-war federation of the Scandinavian states, a plan which is now being peddled in Helsinki and Stockholm. Indeed, Finland, in the past, has had her chance to become one of the Northern neutrals, but chose instead to be a Nazi vassal.

The situation as regards Finland seems to me to have been summed up well in a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* editorial of September 28, 1943, from which I quote these passages:

It is plain, from feelers the Finns are sending out, that they are fed up with their war with Russia and would like to get out from under. It is plain also that they would like for the United States and Britain not only to snatch their chestnuts from the fire, but also to butter them. Up to this point, it appears, the State Department has resisted Finnish blandishments to use our influence to obtain terms from Russia.

In the first place, our relations with Russia are none too smooth for a score of reasons, and another point of friction would be added if we should attempt to plead Finland's case at Moscow. Moscow might easily remind us that Finland is an active ally of Adolf Hitler, tying up numerous Russian divisions, while the Soviet Union and the United States are doing their best to beat Hitler. . . .

The British have declared war on Finland. Logically, so should the United States. In any case, we are hardly in position

to dictate Moscow policy toward Finland, even if it were not plain that, ever since the 1918 Brest-Litovsk treaty, Finland has been a creature of German influence and is now a Hitler ally. If the Finns want peace badly enough, they know where to go to get it.



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## CHAPTER VII

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# Russia, the Balkans, and the Near East

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*"Southeast Europe is overpopulated with poverty-stricken peasants. The time is ripe for great social and economic readjustments. The land-distribution problem from Hungary to the Aegean Sea demands drastic measures. It would be a great mistake on the part of the Western democracies to ignore these facts." J. Emlyn Williams, authority on Southeastern Europe, in the Christian Science Monitor of October 28, 1943.*

MY FAVORITE anecdote of the war comes from the tough little Balkan country of Montenegro which in 1918 became a part of Yugoslavia. After the Nazi invasion of April, 1941, the Montenegrins were among the first to raise the standard of guerrilla warfare which has since swept the dismembered kingdom from end to end. German troops were rushed to Montenegro, using the most modern equipment against the ill-armed mountaineers. Yet they could not subdue the rebels.

One day, the story goes, a neutral observer went to see the chieftain of the Montenegrin guerrillas. He was amazed by the heroic resistance which this little nation of barely 250,000 had put up against the mightiest military machine in the world. Half admiringly, half in pity, the observer

asked the guerrilla leader, "How many of you are there, trying to defeat the German Army?" "Sir," replied the Montenegrin, "we and the Russians number 180,000,000."

"We and the Russians." Think of these words as spoken, —and they well might be—by a Serb, or a Czech, or a Bulgarian. They, and the Slovaks, the Croats, the Slovenes, and of course the Poles, form the great family of Slav nations, the largest, the strongest, the most prolific in Europe.

It was not until the middle of the last century that the many tribes of the Slav race awoke to full consciousness of their kinship and of the wide range of their common interests. The first All-Slav Congress was held in 1841. Panslavism was born.

The leadership of the new movement naturally fell to the Russians, by far the most numerous and most powerful component of the group. In the period between 1860 and 1914, the Tsarist government consistently used Panslav ideas and sentiment to further the ends of Russian imperialism: to keep the reluctant Poles in the empire, to undermine and break up the Austrian "prison of nations," to push Turkish influence back in the Balkans.

Before and during the last war, Panslavism played a great role. From all parts of Austria and the Balkans, delegations pilgrimed to Moscow, the holy shrine of all Slavs; some congresses were held in other Slav cities, though. Everywhere, the "Sokol" organizations of athletes and gymnasts fostered the movement, spurring the oppressed Slav minorities to rise against their Teutonic masters at the first opportunity.

Such an opportunity was provided by the war of 1914–1918. On the eastern front, whole regiments of Czechs and Slovaks went over to the Russians, with flying colors and bands playing. They formed the *Česka Družina* (Czech Division) which at the war's end numbered some 70,000 men.

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Croats and Slovenes too deserted the Austrian ranks whenever they found an opportunity.

After the Russian Revolution, Pan Slavism for a while seemed dead. It had no place in the program of world revolution on which the early Bolsheviks embarked. Lenin and Trotsky were out to free not Slavs, but "slaves"—the working masses.

With the passing of the revolutionary phase, Pan Slavism again came into its own. The first signs of its rebirth came in the years 1936-1938, when Russian diplomacy manifested a strong interest in the integrity and independence of Czechoslovakia. When that little country was brutally sacrificed on the altar of Munich, the big Russian brother withdrew sulking into his tent, abandoning the Franco-British alliance.

Later, in the era of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the Kremlin evinced an interest in the Balkans so lively that it infuriated the Germans as much as Soviet penetration of the Baltic States. Rightly or wrongly, the Nazis charged that it was Russian wire-pulling that engineered the *coup d'état* of March, 1941, through which the Yugoslavs ousted the Regent and broke the Axis pact.

Since the outbreak of the Russo-German war, a tremendous upsurge of Pan Slav feeling has occurred. Not only in Russia, but in America too, Slav congresses have been organized, urging all possible aid to the Russians.

The first All-Slav meeting under Soviet management was held in Moscow August 10-11, 1941; a permanent All-Slav Committee was elected and functions in the Soviet capital. A second All-Slav meeting took place April 4-5, 1942, also in Moscow, and a third on May 9, 1943, in the same city. This last congress was attended by some two thousand delegates from every Slav country in the world, including many underground fighters.

The resolutions adopted, and the manifestoes issued by these All-Slav congresses are noteworthy for their strong emotional appeal and fervent nationalism which contrast strangely with the class-revolutionary outpourings, clad in the pedantic phraseology of Marxism, that formerly used to come out of Moscow.

There is real, passionate beauty in some of these appeals to the "Oppressed Brother Slavs," much of which inevitably is lost in the English translation. But even so, words like these ring with stirring and lasting force: "All of us Slavs have one misfortune, one grief, one enemy. All of us have one aim: to free our native lands of the Hitlerite invaders" (from a proclamation by the permanent All-Slav Committee, March, 1943).

Or, take this quotation from the "Appeal to Brother Slavs in Occupied Countries" issued by the Third All-Slav Meeting:

The Hitlerites . . . are forcing the Slavs to work for the Prussian landowners and the German munitions lords, to forge arms which will be used against their brothers. . . . Every Slav chained to a German machine replaces a German leaving for the front to kill other Slavs. Every bullet manufactured by a Slav in a German plant carries death to a brother Slav. . . .

Listen, brother Slavs—Czechs, Slovaks, Carpathian Ukrainians, Poles, Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Bulgarians, Macedonians—we are addressing you from Slav soil drenched with the blood of our sons and brothers, from demolished towns and villages, from woods teeming with guerrillas; we are calling upon all who value liberty, upon all who want to live and work in freedom. Take up arms against Hitler's tyranny. Time is pressing. Every extra day is costing the subjugated Slavs thousands of human lives. Strain your every nerve in struggle. In the name of a happy future, let us sweep the German-fascist slaveholders from the face of the earth. . . .

Oppressed Slav brothers! Join as one man under the sacred

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banner of national war against Hitler's imperialists, mortal enemies of all Slavs. Fight until final victory is attained!

Long live the fighting unity of the Slav peoples!

Long live our freedom!

Death to the German invaders!

We must realize that the fighting unity now formed between all Slav nationalities will remain a potent force also after this war. The flame kindled at the All-Slav meetings will still burn brightly long after Hitler's ashes have been strewn to the four winds.

Needless to say, this new All-Slav solidarity will also be one of the greatest trumps in Stalin's hands at the coming peace conference. In the above-cited appeal of the Third All-Slav meeting, there is a revealing passage:

Future Slav generations will remember with reverence the heroic exploits of Soviet warriors who have proved to the whole world the strength of Slav arms. They will remember with pride legendary Stalingrad and its courageous defenders. The glorious deeds of the Russian, Ukrainian, and Byelorussian guerrillas, the people's avengers, will be looked upon for ages to come as unparalleled instances of the Slav invincible will for national liberty and independence.

This is the awakening of the great Slav masses of Europe under Russian leadership. It is a movement that may well develop a dynamism and intensity as great as or even greater than, those produced by the German awakening and unification under Bismarck. Fortunately, there is reasonable hope that the Slavs will make a better and wiser use of their latent strength than has been shown by the united Teutons.

The first effects of this rebirth of Pan Slavism under the Soviet aegis already are making themselves felt in the classical trouble corner of Europe, the Balkans. This motley assemblage of races and nationalities, most of them Slavs, inhabits what is traditionally the arena where Russian and

British influences meet and contend. In the post-war era, this centuries-old struggle between London and Moscow for control of the Balkans is likely to resume with new intensity, and for new stakes.

Britain, being essentially a conservative power, with large material interests to safeguard in the Balkans, naturally is opposed to any revolutionary upheavals in that area. This is also, though on a somewhat different plane, the primary concern of United States policy. Both countries want democratic regimes to take the place of the odious dictatorships of the past two decades, but it is to be a democracy based on the capitalist system, with due respect for foreign investments.

Russia's interests in the Balkans, as elsewhere, are of an entirely different nature. What she seeks is political and spiritual ascendancy, and a friendly combination of Balkan States as one of the outer layers of her security system.

What kind of political and economic regimes would Moscow like to see prevail in the Balkans? Soviets? Or democracy?

I have stated before that all present indications are that the Kremlin does not wish to Bolshevize Europe, at least not in the immediate future, and not by means of military intervention. However, I have also pointed out that the Russians obviously will not oppose revolutionary movements that spring up spontaneously as a result of years of war and oppression, though they may in some cases seek to lead them into democratic, rather than Soviet, channels.

It is quite possible that Stalin's policy toward the Balkans differs in this respect from the line he has taken in regard to Germany and Poland. While the Russians may hesitate to launch the redoubtable German neighbor on new experiments in dynamism, there is no apparent reason why they should not welcome the spread to the Balkans

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of their own economic and political system. These backward and predominantly agricultural countries, especially in so far as they are populated by "Slav brothers," are unlikely ever to become a threat to Russia. Adapted to the Soviet system, in one form or another, they would be immune to the blandishments of British and American capitalism—an obvious advantage from the Soviet point of view.

While Russia's Balkan policy has not yet been formulated in the Soviet press or in Stalin's speeches, the Kremlin has given London and Washington to understand that it is directly interested in that area. It is also an open secret that the seemingly unaccountable delay in launching the long-promised invasion of the Balkans by the Allies was actually due to Russia's hands-off policy. Prior to the Teheran Conference, the Balkans, in fact, were just about the last place where Moscow would welcome the opening of a "second front," because of the political consequences that may spring from the presence of British and American—or Polish—troops in an area which Russia regards as her rightful sphere of influence.

Even if Russian policy is not directed toward the immediate introduction of the Soviet system in the Balkans area, but accepts the establishment of democratic regimes, these will hardly be of a type consonant with British and American interests. Democracy is a flexible concept; it does not necessarily have to be predicated on the capitalist system. Nor does one have to accept the British view that the democratic way of life thrives best under the gentle sun of a constitutional monarchy.

It is reasonable to assume that the Russians have no use for kings and princes, constitutional or otherwise, in what they regard as their natural sphere of interest. They would doubtless prefer the establishment, throughout the Balkans, of the republican form of government. And it is equally

certain that they would welcome the application of a strong dose of Socialism in areas not "ripe," or otherwise unsuited, for the integral nationalization of the means of production on the Russian model.

As to the political complexion of the regimes to be set up in the Balkans, and elsewhere in the neighborhood of the Soviet Union, it is no secret that the Russians regard the "popular front" type of government as the next best thing after the Soviet system.

"The wind from the Russian steppes," wrote the Yugoslav journalist Bogdan Raditsa in *The New Republic* of September 20, 1943, "almost invariably brings the Balkans clearer and fresher weather." That wind, I guess, is going to blow pretty strong after the war, and the weather is likely to become somewhat too fresh for Anglo-American vested interests in the Balkans.

#### TESTING GROUND: YUGOSLAVIA

The coming struggle for the Balkans has already cast its shadow over the largest country in that area, Yugoslavia. If the spectacle which that country presented to the world in late 1943 is to be taken as an omen of things to come, there is little ground for optimism.

With the Nazi hordes rampant throughout the land, burning, looting, and murdering, the patriotic movement of resistance in Yugoslavia was still split into two rival factions engaged in an internecine war. One faction was backed by the British (with the tacit approval of the United States), the other by Russia.

The history of this miniature civil war—which may at any time become a full-fledged civil war—is as curious as it is distressing.

After the collapse of organized resistance to the Nazi in-



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vasion in April, 1941, the Yugoslav Colonel (now General) Draja Mikhailovitch withdrew with a small force of regulars and guerrillas into the wooded mountains of the Sandjak to continue the fight. From all sides, "Chetniks" (Serb guerrillas) streamed to his colors. Before long, Mikhailovitch had gathered around him an army estimated at 100,000 which held vast areas in Bosnia, Herzegovina, the Sandjak, Montenegro, and southern Serbia, and inflicted many smarting defeats on the Axis forces.

By the end of 1941, Mikhailovitch had become all the world's hero. In the press, over the radio, even in motion pictures, his exploits were praised. British and American officials publicly acclaimed the Chetnik leader and awarded him high decorations; Lend-Lease supplies were shipped to his armies by devious routes. On January 12, 1942, King Peter II of Yugoslavia appointed Mikhailovitch as Minister of War in his government-in-exile.

Then strange things began to happen and nasty rumors cropped up. There was a long and unaccounted-for lull in the fighting, as if a secret truce had been concluded. The Yugoslav government, when questioned, declared time and again that Mikhailovitch was husbanding his forces for another great campaign to be launched if and when outside help materialized.

But the Moscow radio, and Communist papers the world over, had a different version. Mikhailovitch, they declared, had turned traitor, had deserted the anti-Fascist cause. He was dealing sub rosa with the quisling government of Marshal Milan Neditch in Belgrade, with the Italians, even with the hated Nazis.

At first, the story seemed wholly unbelievable. But Moscow insisted; it offered proof. In February, 1943, the Soviet Ambassador to the exiled governments in London, Alexan-

der E. Bogomolov, handed Premier Slobodan Iovanovitch of Yugoslavia an official note bluntly accusing Mikhailovitch of collaboration with the Axis.

It was an unprecedented move: one United Nations government formally charging a Cabinet member of another United Nations government with treason. Moscow demanded that Mikhailovitch be dismissed from his post as Minister of War. The Yugoslav government declared that the charges were unfounded and refused to comply.

In the meantime, a new army of Yugoslav guerrillas, known as the Partisans, had sprung up in the north-central portions of the kingdom, operating independently from Mikhailovitch. Shrouded in deep mystery for over a year, and almost totally ignored by the world press, the People's Liberation Movement, as the newcomer was called, grew by leaps and bounds. By the late fall of 1943, the Partisans' daring military operations, extending from Trieste to the Hungarian border and southward along the Dalmatian coast to Albania, had become front-page news in the American press. And for the first time, the political organization behind the Partisan armies had come into focus. Because of the actual, and even more the potential, importance of this movement, it may be of interest here to outline its setup.

Founded in the late fall of 1942, the Partisan movement at an early stage crystallized into a political body, military formations, and an administrative apparatus.

At the head of the movement, there stands the "Vece"—an anti-Fascist Council of sixty-five members representing all classes, and all racial and religious groups in the country, which held its constituent assembly at Bihac, West Bosnia, in November, 1942. It has an executive committee whose chairman is a Slovene, Dr. Ivan Ribar, the president of Yugoslavia's first constituent assembly, the Skupshtina.

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Dr. Ribar thus is the political head of the movement.

Far better known than Ribar is his military counterpart, Marshal Tito, the commander-in-chief of the Partisan armies. Tito is really a civilian, Josip Broz or Brozovitch, a metal worker from Zagorye who before the war worked in the Zagreb railroad machine shops. He is a Croat, born in 1887 or thereabouts. Louis Adamic, the Slovene-American author, describes him as "medium-sized, blue-eyed, blond, with a striking face, a very attractive smile and pleasant manner which inspire endless devotion."

Josip Broz was one of those race-conscious Slavs I have mentioned above, who in the last war deserted from the Austro-Hungarian army and went over to the Russians. When the Civil War broke out, he joined the Reds. After his return to Yugoslavia, in 1923, he was sentenced to five years in prison on the—undoubtedly true—charge of being a Communist. After his release in 1928 he went underground, working for the overthrow of the royal dictatorship. At the time of the Spanish Civil War, he helped to recruit volunteers for, and fought with, the International Brigade.

When the Chetniks early in 1942 virtually ceased fighting the Axis occupants, Tito took up where Mikhailovitch had left off. With his long experience as an underground organizer and probably with some assistance from Russia, Tito in an amazingly short time recruited and put in the field an army estimated at 180,000 men.

This Partisan army consists of two elements: (1) the *Narodna Oslobodilacka Vojska*, or People's Army of Liberation, which is composed of army corps, divisions, brigades, regiments, and so forth, and fights like a regular army under the command of five thousand officers, including eleven generals; and (2) the *Partizanski Odredi Jugoslavije*, or

Yugoslav Partisan Detachments, which, scattered over the whole country, fight in guerrilla fashion.

Early in December 1943, an extraordinary conference of 142 delegates from the various parts of Yugoslavia freed by the Partisans elected, over the emphatic protest of King Peter, a provisional government headed by Dr. Ribar, with Tito as Defense Minister. The seat of the new administration is reported to be at Novo Mesto, a small town in Slovenia.

That the Partisan movement is largely controlled from Moscow is indisputable. However, it appears from eyewitness accounts that only a relatively minor fraction of the movement is composed of Communists and that the "Vece" in particular represents a coalition of various progressive parties, on the "popular front" pattern. It is also worthy of note that the administrative setup in Partisan-controlled areas is distinctly of a non-Soviet type.

The political program of the Partisans is in tune with the manifestoes of the Free Germany Committee and the Union of Polish Patriots which I have discussed in earlier chapters. According to Bogdan Raditsa (*The Nation*, October 2, 1943) these are the Partisans' announced aims and principles: (1) the liberation of the country from the occupation forces and the establishment of truly democratic rights and liberties for all peoples of Yugoslavia; (2) the inviolability of private property, with full opportunity for initiative in the economic field; (3) no radical changes to be introduced in the social structure, except that reactionary district administrations are to be replaced by others democratically elected; all social and administrative measures to be decided after the war by representatives freely elected by the people; (4) no violence or lawlessness to be tolerated; (5) full recognition of national rights for Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia, the Macedonians, and others.

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One could hardly describe such aspirations as Bolshevism. Nevertheless, Mikhailovitch and his supporters abroad have repeatedly declared that the Partisan movement is all-out Communist and have refused all collaboration with it. Worse than that, Mikhailovitch's troops instead of fighting the Nazis engaged, through the summer and fall of 1943, in bloody clashes with Partisan units.

The antagonism between Tito and Mikhailovitch reaches deep and far. It stems from three principal sources. Socially, it represents the perennial conflict between the ruling class (the Yugoslav government-in-exile) and the disinherited peasant masses; racially, it mirrors two decades of bitter strife between the Serbs, or rather the centralist-minded Pan-Serbs, of whom Mikhailovitch is a typical representative, and the federalist aspirations of Croats and Slovenes as personified by Tito and Ribar; politically, it reflects the struggle for supremacy in the Balkans of Russia and Great Britain, the former backing Tito, the latter Mikhailovitch.

While this situation potentially constitutes a great danger, it must be said that the British lately have shown a very conciliatory spirit, in line with their general policy of accommodating the difficult Russians to the limit of possibility. They have not backed their man, Mikhailovitch, to the hilt as the Soviets have backed Tito.

Since the summer of 1943, in particular, the British Middle East Command—which is in military charge of the Balkans—has worked hard to bring the two warring factions together. As early as 1942, the British had established military liaison with Mikhailovitch's headquarters; then, in June, 1943, they assigned a military mission to Tito's High Command. American liaison officers also are active at both places.

Up to late 1943, neither these liaison agents, nor the

constant British and American pressure on the Yugoslav government-in-exile now at Cairo, and on the Soviet government, had been able to bring about a settlement between Tito and Mikhailovitch. It is greatly to be hoped that such a solution is reached before any Allied army marches into Yugoslavia; otherwise explosive developments are to be expected.

#### RUSSIANS VS. RUMANIANS

Alone among Russia's neighbors, Rumania has few, if any, apologists in this country. One reason for this coolness is, of course, the state of war that has existed between the United States and Rumania, since June, 1942.

Of itself, however, the American declaration of war on Rumania did not signify any inherent hostility, or a basic clash of interest in the two countries' relationship; it was essentially a gesture of good will toward Russia.

The real reason why hardly any American, or any European for that matter, would feel like pleading Rumania's case stems from the singularly low prestige which that country enjoys throughout the world; it is the inevitable result of the political immaturity and confusion, the social iniquities, and the bottomless corruption that have made Rumania an international byword.

Nicholas II, last Tsar of Russia, once made a classical remark about the kingdom across the River Pruth: "Rumania—that's not a country, it's a profession." That was putting it mildly; Rumania, in fact, is and has always been a racket.

Ever since it became an independent state in the nineteenth century, Rumania has been run for the personal profit of her princes, of the landed gentry ("Boyars"), and of an incredibly corrupt bureaucracy, whose leading administrative principle is to collect *baksheesh* (graft) for everything it does or consents not to do.

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The stark contrast between these high-handed state racketeers, parading their ill-gotten wealth on Bucharest's glamorous boulevards, and the wretched, half-starving, illiterate peasant masses used to be one of the most shocking sights in Europe.

Because she allowed herself in 1916 to be half coaxed, half kicked into the Allied camp, Rumania at the end of the last war was able to collect a handsome amount of international *baksheesh*. Her area was more than doubled to 122,282 square miles, with a population of 19,000,000, whereof only about two thirds were of Rumanian stock.

Rumania's relations with Russia have been constantly troubled by the Bessarabian question. Bessarabia, an oblong province stretching from the Bukovina to the Black Sea between the rivers Pruth and Dniester, successively belonged to Turkey, Russia, and Rumania. On an area of 17,325 square miles, there lives a motley population of 2,867,000 composed of Rumanians, Ukrainians, Russians, Germans, Jews, and gypsies.

The disputed province has belonged to Russia since 1812, as the fruit of a victorious war against Turkey. Like Poland, Finland, and the Baltic States, Bessarabia thus formed an integral part of the Russian empire for over a hundred years. In the tumult of the Bolshevik Revolution, Bessarabia was seized by Rumanian troops and on November 27, 1918, it was formally annexed by Rumania. The Allied Powers sanctioned this grab at the Treaty of Paris (October 28, 1920), over the emphatic protest of the Soviet government. As a matter of fact, Russia never recognized Bessarabia's incorporation with Rumania, *nor did the United States*, which also kept aloof from the Paris Treaty on the ground that no representative of the Russian government had been admitted to state the Russian case.

For more than twenty years after the annexation, Bessarabia lived under Rumania military rule, in a state of suspense between peace and war. On either side of the Dniester, the military were in control. No bridges spanned the river, no ferries crossed it. At times, a fugitive from the OGPU, or from the no less redoubtable *Siguranță* (Rumanian security police) would attempt to swim across the river, usually finding his death in the turbulent waters. All normal communications, and all commercial exchanges, between the two countries were suspended in those long years of latent war.

On ethnological grounds, the Rumanians have a somewhat better case in their claim to Bessarabia than have the Russians. The largest racial group in the disputed borderland is that of the Moldavians who are akin to the Rumanians; they form fifty to fifty-two percent of the total population of Bessarabia. Of Ukrainians and Great Russians there are about 800,000, the rest of the population being made up by Germans, Jews, Bulgars, and gypsies.

While Soviet statisticians give a different picture of the ethnical composition, they do not attempt to dispute the predominance of the Moldavian element. Russia's claim to Bessarabia rests primarily on the assertion that Rumanian troops in 1918 forcibly overthrew the "Democratic Moldavian Republic" which had been formed after the Bolshevik Revolution; this was a Soviet-controlled state combining Bessarabia with the territory of some 1,300,000 Moldavians living on the eastern bank of the Dniester.

In 1923, when the hitherto loosely organized group of states under Soviet authority was firmly welded in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Moldavians east of the Dniester formed an autonomous republic within the framework of the Ukrainian S.S.R., keeping the door open for an eventual return of their Bessarabian brothers.



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Throughout the following years, the Soviet government's policy toward Rumania was dominated by the desire to bring about a reunion of the two parts of the Moldavian Republic separated in 1918.

This moment came on June 27, 1940, when Rumania, paralyzed by intestine strife and under heavy pressure from all sides, was forced to yield to a Soviet ultimatum and withdrew her troops from Bessarabia and the adjoining Northern Bukovina; a few days later, both provinces were occupied by Soviet forces and incorporated with the U.S.S.R. Incidentally, the Bukovina (area, 2,035 square miles; population about 846,000) is, along with Eastern Galicia, the only strip of land annexed by the Soviet in the 1939-1940 period of expansion that had not formerly belonged to the Russian empire; like Eastern Galicia it was, until 1918, a province of the Austro-Hungarian empire. A densely populated area, the Bukovina, like Bessarabia, is inhabited by a mixture of Rumanians and Ukrainians, with a sprinkling of Germans \* and some 37,000 Poles; the predominant element are the Ukrainians.

Following the retrocession of Bessarabia, and its reunion with the Moldavian autonomous republic, the latter, in July, 1940, was elevated to the rank of a constituent Soviet state (Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic), the thirteenth member of the Union. The Bukovina was incorporated with the Ukrainian S.S.R.

A new chapter in Russian-Rumanian relations was opened with the Nazi assault on the Soviet Union in June, 1941. Like Finland in the north, Rumania, having first yielded to a peaceful occupation by German troops, entered the war on the first day of the invasion and for the same

\* Under a German-Soviet agreement of September 5, 1940, 136,989 German nationals were repatriated from the Soviet-occupied Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina; only very few stayed behind.

purpose: recovery of the lost territory and annexation of some more.

With the powerful aid of the Nazi panzer divisions, the Rumanian army quickly reconquered Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina in the first weeks of the war. Again like their Finnish comrades-in-arms, the Rumanian troops of Marshal Ion Antonescu did not halt at the old frontiers, but pushed deep into Soviet territory.

In return for a heavy price paid in blood, Hitler allowed his Rumanian satellite formally to annex a broad belt of Soviet land on the left bank of the Dniester. By a decree of October 18, 1941, Antonescu put the entire territory between the Dniester and Bug Rivers, an area of about 16,000 square miles, under Rumanian administration. The new province, with a population of 2,300,000, received the name of *Transnistria*; the seat of the Rumanian administration was established at Tiraspol, northwest of the great Black Sea port of Odessa which also belonged to the province.

The hour seems near when the situation will be once more reversed, and Transnistria and Bessarabia will again become the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, Odessa and part of Transnistria reverting to the Ukrainian S.S.R. It is one of the announced aims of the Soviet Union to recover these territories and reunite them with the U.S.S.R.

The beaten and demoralized Rumanians—they have had, as one British officer recently put it, “a rather poor war,” and lost hundreds of thousands of men—are in no position to hold their own against the Red Army. Their only hope, as in the case of the Finns, the Hungarians, and other Nazi satellites, lies in an Anglo-American intervention in their favor.

This preposterous expectation on the part of an enemy country goes to such lengths that, according to a Reuter

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dispatch of September 29, 1943, "some Rumanians hope to preserve this land [Bessarabia] after the war with the help of Britain and the United States." Indeed, now that their gamble on Hitler's might has led them to the brink of disaster, the gentlemen Boyars and *baksheesh* racketeers are looking to the American soldier to pull their chestnuts out of the fire!

While I doubt that even the most anti-Soviet politician in Britain or in the United States would risk a serious quarrel with Russia over Rumania's "right" to Bessarabia or the Bukovina, there is a real danger of complications arising from disagreement over Rumania's future status and regime.

As is well known, there are large Anglo-American interests vested in the Rumanian oil industry, and both countries also are looking forward to the reopening of the Rumanian market for their commerce. Russia, on the other hand, is almost sure to include Rumania within her sphere of interest, both politically and economically.

Beyond that, it is quite probable that Moscow would like a thorough housecleaning to take place in Rumania, sweeping the rotten Hohenzollern dynasty, the Boyar latifundia, and the venal bureaucracy into the dustbin of history. Indeed, I suspect that if there is going to be a real Bolshevik revolution anywhere, after this war, it will be in Rumania. It will come of itself, born of decades of pent-up misery, Fascist oppression, and general misgovernment. The Russians will not even have to set fire to the political and social tinder that has accumulated in Rumania in the past few years; it will flare up at the first spark of total defeat.

### BULGARIA: RUSSIA'S FRIEND—GERMANY'S ALLY

Perhaps the best friends the Russians have in the Slav world are the Bulgars. The old and nationwide affection

with which the common man in Bulgaria looks up to "Grandfather Ivan," has three strong roots.

One is the bond of kinship. The Russian and Bulgarian nations are closely related by race, language, and culture. Secondly, it was Russia's armed intervention in 1877 that enabled the Bulgarian patriots to shake off the five-centuries-old Turkish yoke and laid the foundations for an independent state of Bulgaria. Finally, no serious differences, territorial or other, separate Russia and Bulgaria, though it is true that the alignment of powers has placed the two countries into opposite camps both in the last and in the present war.

How exceptionally strong the ties of Russian-Bulgarian amity are can best be judged by the fact that Hitler has not been able to make the Sofia government break off relations with Moscow, still less join the anti-Soviet "crusade," despite the virtual occupation of Bulgaria by German troops in March, 1941. The Germans managed without great difficulty to involve Bulgaria in war with the United States and Britain, though no hostility existed between them, and they have freely used Bulgarian troops to police conquered Yugoslavia and Greece, but thus far every attempt to embroil Bulgaria with the Soviet Union has failed.

Not that Bulgaria's Fascist-minded leaders, the Philoffs, Popoffs, and Gabrovskis, would have had scruples about going to war against Russia, but they were simply unable to make the people march. Indeed, they were fully aware that the Bulgarian regiments, if led into combat against the Russians, would desert at the first opportunity.

No one knew this better than the weak but despotic King Boris III, who, like his father Ferdinand, gambled on a German victory but apparently realized in the summer of 1943 that he had backed the wrong horse. He paid with his life for this belated realization. For, even though the mys-

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tery of Boris' sudden death in August, 1943, may not be fully solved until after the war, there seems to be little doubt that he was assassinated by a German agent after Hitler had learnt that his friend was trying to liquidate his Axis commitments.

Whether the three-man regency which now rules Bulgaria in the name of the boy-king Simeon II can do any better than the late Boris, remains to be seen. The three regents, Boris's brother Cyril, former Premier Bogdan Philoff, and General Nikola Michoff, all are known to be strongly pro-German, and the new Cabinet, headed by Dobri Boshiloff, still is taking orders from Berlin, but relations with Russia were not materially altered by the King's death.

From Moscow, however, a stronger wind has been blowing into Bulgaria lately. For two and a half years the Russians have patiently put up with a lot of Nazi-inspired provocations on the part of the Sofia government.

That this patience is not inexhaustible and may indeed be reaching its end was indicated in a series of strongly worded warnings which the famous Bulgarian Communist leader Georgi Dimitroff addressed to his countrymen last September in the Moscow *Pravda*.

After the two national disasters of 1912-1913 and 1918, wrote Dimitroff, Bulgaria "is now in mortal danger of being dragged into a third national catastrophe that will spell greater ruin for her independence and future. . . . Never before was the gulf between the Bulgarian people and the ruling clique of German agents wider than today. Never before was the criminal and senseless character of this pro-German policy as evident as today. . . . Despite the ceaseless hostile activity in Bulgaria, the Soviet people have hitherto manifested the greatest patience, convinced that this pro-German policy is profoundly alien to the Bulgarian

people. The Russian people, who in the past shed their blood for the freedom and independence of the fraternal Bulgarian people and who are now bearing the main brunt of the struggle against the historic enemies of the Slavs—the German invaders—have the right to warn Bulgaria that there is a limit to their patience. What can Bulgaria hope for if she continues to remain at war with Great Britain and the United States, helping fascist Germany in the war against the U.S.S.R., incurring the merited hatred of the Balkan peoples enslaved by the Germans?" (Quoted from the *Daily Worker*, September 20-21, 1943.)

Given Dimitroff's position as a former Secretary-General of the Comintern, and his close association with Stalin, we may take it for granted that he accurately expresses the Soviet government's views on the Bulgarian situation. What is more, there are signs that Dimitroff already has been designated as future chief of the Bulgarian government, as far as the Kremlin is concerned. And, for geographical if not for other reasons, it is evident that Moscow will have a decisive say when the post-war fate of Bulgaria comes up for settlement.

Does this mean that a Soviet Bulgaria is inevitable? Not necessarily. Here again, there is at least a fair chance that the Allies may be able to persuade Russia to settle for a "popular front" government instead of a full-fledged Soviet regime. But hardly for less.

#### RUSSIA, TURKEY, AND IRAN

Turkey has played in this war a role similar to that of Sweden. Her able, but somewhat cynical, leaders were for a long time convinced that the war would end in a stalemate and a compromise peace. So they decided to stay on the fence, looking forward to the day when they would be able to reap the fruits of armed neutrality.

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In the meantime, the Turks, like the Swedes, played their cards close to the chest. They gave sympathy, favors, and free advice to both sides. They traded with both sides, selling chromium to, and buying guns and planes from, the Allies as well as the Axis. They were always willing to mediate if either belligerent side asked for it.

When Hitler was having the upper hand, the Turks were cool toward the Allies. When the United Nations' stock went up on the battlefield, von Papen's stock slumped in Ankara. The whole course of the war can be read on the barometer of Turkey's relations with Germany and with the Allies.

Turkey's changing moods had a particularly noticeable effect on her relations with Russia. These have been going up and down in the years of war like the lines on a fever chart. At times, relations were warm in the morning and cool in the evening, or vice versa .

There was, to begin with, a backlog of ill-feeling. For several centuries the Ottoman Empire and Russia had bitterly fought for control of the Balkans and of the Straits that link the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

After the last war, Russia and Turkey found themselves much in the same desperate plight. They had both suffered defeat, had gone through a revolution, and were living, ragged and unloved, on the margin of good European society. So they made up their differences and became good friends.

A pact of non-aggression and friendship was signed in 1925. In the following years, the more powerful and industrially more advanced Russia lent Turkey a helping hand in many ways. She extended credits, furnished materials, sent engineers, helped to build Turkey's first factories. Russia also provided the initial diplomatic support for Turkey's demand that her right to fortify the Dar-

danelles and the Bosphorus should be restored by international agreement. This was eventually done at the Convention of Montreux (July 20, 1936), which abolished practically all the restrictions that had been imposed on Turkey by the Treaty of Lausanne.

The cordial relationship between Russia and Turkey began to cool off when the former signed her pact with Germany in August 1939, while the latter on October 19 concluded an alliance with France and Britain. This alliance, however, remained largely on paper though it may yet bring Turkey into the war in the near future.

In September, 1939, the Turkish Foreign Minister (now Premier) Sükrü Saracoglu went to Moscow in an attempt to iron out the growing differences with Russia. He stayed almost a month but accomplished nothing; most of the time he was left to cool his heels in commissarial ante-chambers.

The proud Turk resented this cavalier treatment and even today he has not quite overcome his intense dislike of the U.S.S.R. His feelings are said to be shared, much in the same personal manner, by the Turkish President Ismet İnönü who once, at the moment of greatest tension between the two countries, was labeled in the Soviet press Russia's "Public Enemy No. 1" in Turkey.

Later, Turkey manifested alarm at the expansionist tendencies of Soviet policy in the Baltic area and in the Balkans. After the outbreak of the Nazi-Soviet war, these suspicions were cleverly exploited by Dr. Goebbels' trained propagandists. For instance, one day it was officially "revealed" in Berlin that in the era of Russian friendship with Germany Molotov had bargained with von Ribbentrop for control of the Turkish Straits. However that may be, on August 10, 1941, Britain and the Soviet Union, in a joint declaration, reaffirmed that they had no designs on the



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Turkish Straits, and both have lived up to this pledge.

Even here in America there is a widespread belief that Russia after the war will seek direct access to the Mediterranean in one form or another. Actually there is no concrete evidence whatever to substantiate this theory. Russia's policy, it must be repeated, is not directed toward territorial expansion but is designed to create a zone of influence and security outside the Soviet borders. A friendly Bulgaria and a good-neighborly Turkey will be the surest guarantees against Russia's raising any demands for control of the Straits.

A serious crisis in Russo-Turkish relations developed after the attempted assassination, on February 24, 1942, of the German ambassador to Ankara, Franz von Papen. Along with two Turkish citizens, two Russians were arrested; they were convicted of complicity by a Turkish court. The Soviet press furiously denounced this "abuse of justice" and demanded the release of the Soviet citizens, which Ankara rejected. For a while it looked as though a diplomatic break between Russia and Turkey would result from the affair, but better counsel prevailed.

Ever since, British diplomacy has worked overtime to improve the strained relations between Moscow and Ankara. A leading role in these efforts was played by the British Ambassador to Turkey, Sir Hugh Montgomery Knatchbull-Hugessen. He has been largely successful in bringing the two allies of Britain closer together.

Throughout the early part of 1943, a friendly atmosphere prevailed in Russo-Turkish relations, due largely to the Allied successes in Africa and Southern Russia which all but eliminated the Nazi pincers threat against Turkey.

In mid-September, however, a new incident occurred. Without apparent reason, the new Moscow journal *War and the Working Class*, which is known to reflect the Krem-

lin's views on international affairs, charged in a bitter editorial, "Who Has Profited Most From Turkish Neutrality," that the Nazis had been the principal beneficiaries. Turkish papers replied in heated or caustic tones and the barometer slumped once more.

Still there is good hope that these ups and downs, inevitable in wartime, will make room, in the post-war period, for more even and stable relations. There is absolutely no reason to suspect the Soviet Union of aggressive designs on Turkish territory, nor is Moscow in any way concerned about the political regime in Ankara. On the other hand it is clear that Turkey harbors no hostile intentions toward Russia either.

The only real obstacle to smooth relations between Moscow and Ankara, in the past few years, has been Nazi Germany, operating through her master of intrigues, Von Papen. Once this obstacle is eliminated, the road will be clear for a sound and enduring friendship between Russia and Turkey.

Russia's other Near Eastern neighbor, Iran, may become a minor headache at the peace conference. There are some indications that the Russians intend for a while to hold on to the positions which they acquired in Northern Iran in August-September, 1941, when British and Soviet forces jointly occupied the land of the untractable Shah Mirza Riza Pahlevi. On their side, the British are likely to do the same.

Recently, there have been some disquieting reports of intense rivalry between the Russians established in the north of Iran and the British in the south. According to the *New York Times* of October 15, 1943, Stalin also "has shown some uneasiness about the expanding United States Army in Iran." The Soviet government, reports the *Times*, has sought assurances from Washington that Major General

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Donald D. Connelly, head of the Persian Gulf Command, "will be taking his industrious and ingenious engineers back home when the European war is over."

The American soldiers and engineers were sent to Iran to channel and expedite the flow of Lend-Lease supplies to Russia, a purpose Moscow could hardly find fault with. However, it appears that the Russians are apprehensive of some hidden designs such as the establishment of American, or British-American, control over the Iranian oil wells. The Soviets, with the memory of the 1918-1920 interventions always at the back of their minds, also are very susceptible to the presence of foreign armies in strategic areas wherefrom theoretically it would be possible to invade the U.S.S.R.

For the time being, the joint British-Russian military control over Iran rests on an agreement signed at Teheran on January 29, 1942, by which the British and Soviet governments pledged themselves to respect the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence of Iran.

This pledge was solemnly reaffirmed, the United States concurring, in a statement issued at the close of the Teheran conference of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin, on December 1, 1943.

Does Russia, beyond her present positions in Northern Iran, covet access to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean? People who think she does usually argue that the Russian colossus is "land-locked" and must needs seek untrammelled access to the oceans. The answer to this query is that Russia undoubtedly will seek the freest possible access to the seas in the north, the west, the east, and the south, but this can be achieved through international agreements, the concession of free port zones and similar means, without territorial expansion.

Besides, it should not be overlooked that Russia with the tremendous development under the Soviet regime of the

port of Murmansk in the Arctic has acquired a first-rate Atlantic harbor, comparatively close to her industrial centers and largest cities and free of ice the year round.

When, in addition, the Baltic and the Mediterranean again will be open to Soviet shipping, and the ports of Estonia and Latvia again will serve as the natural outlets for Russia's European land masses, we need not worry about Russia being too "land-locked" for comfort.

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## CHAPTER VIII

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# Russia's Role in the Far East

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TO MANY Americans, especially former isolationists, Russia-in-Asia is a matter of greater concern than Russia-in-Europe. This is understandable enough at a time when this country is at death grips with the mightiest military power in the Far East, Japan.

In the eyes of these people, all Russia's sins of commission in Europe do not weigh as heavily as her one cardinal sin of omission in Asia: her failure to grant us air and naval bases in Siberia for the grand assault on Japan. There is a certain paradoxical logic in the fact that those who most insistently clamor for a "second front" in Asia are usually the same who so long opposed the opening of a "second front" in Europe as "premature."

This issue of the Siberian bases is tailor-made for the amateur strategist. He goes by his map and a few rule-of-thumb computations, not realizing that they tell less than half the story, and concludes that Russia's obstinate refusal to let us have those bases denotes at best an appalling lack of solidarity.

On the face of it, it looks like a convincing case. Russia controls in the Far East a huge expanse of territory from which Japan easily could be "scarred and seared and black-

ened from end to end." From Vladivostok, for example, it is only 650 miles to Tokyo, 600 miles to Sasebo and Shimonoseki, 500 miles to Kobe. It is even less to the Japanese bases and cities on Hokkaido Island. Soviet bases on Kamchatka peninsula are within easy fighter range of Japan's great island stronghold of Paramushiro. The rest of the Kurile Islands chain can be bombed from the Russian half of Sakhalin, or from the network of well-equipped airfields that extends north of Vladivostok to the mouth of the Amur River at Nikolaevsk.

That the final attack on Japan proper could be carried out in the most convenient, most effective, and cheapest manner by operating from these Siberian bases is beyond question. No other approach promises greater results in less time and at a more reasonable cost in men and materials. Hence it was only natural for millions of fathers and mothers of America's "expendables" to sit up and take notice when Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., one of the five United States Senators who toured the battlefronts in the summer of 1943, spoke his mind in the Senate early in October of 1943:

I now come to a topic of great delicacy but of such importance to the American people that . . . I feel I must mention it. I refer to the questions raised by Russia's relation with Japan. Certainly all of us who have admired the courage of the Russian people in fighting a dangerous enemy to the death can understand her unwillingness to open a war on other fronts . . . but it is also true that the whole character of the Pacific war would change if the United States had access to the Pacific coastal area of Russia. For reasons of security I shall not say how many American lives would be spared if we receive this aid. [According to widely quoted reports Lodge told the Senate that 1,000,000 American lives could be saved through the use of Russia's Siberian bases.—J.J.] I can say that it is a major factor in the whole Pacific picture. It is one of the biggest military facts staring us in the face.

In itself, this statement is unassailable—except perhaps the figure of 1,000,000 casualties attributed to the Senator—but there are a number of things which Mr. Lodge apparently overlooked and which are the key to the Russian refusal. Walter Lippmann pertinently stated some of them in his column in the *New York Herald Tribune* of October 9, 1943. Terming Senator Lodge's conclusions "dangerously misleading," Lippmann wrote:

What Senator Lodge is suggesting is not that Russia should let us go into Siberia to fight Japan, but that Russia should fight Japan from Siberia. We cannot now put an army, or even a large air force, into Siberia. It is physically impossible for us to get to Siberia in force. *The undefeated Japanese Navy is in the way.* We could fly in some bombers. But the Russian Army and the Russian air force would have to defend the bases against the Japanese army in Manchuria, and *Russia would have to supply the oil and the materials to support our bombers over five thousand miles of railroad.* [My italics]

Mr. Lippmann's rebuttal is well founded. It would be easy enough to fly hundreds, or even thousands, of bombers into Siberia, but they cannot under present conditions be adequately supplied from this country. These same difficulties of maintenance and supply have hitherto prevented any major use of the Chinese mainland for operations against Japan. It is a well-known fact that the Japanese, south of the Hangchow-Nanchang line control only a few ports with their immediate hinterland; vast areas in south-eastern China, including long stretches of the coastline are still in Chinese hands. From the northernmost of these Chinese-held coastal areas, the distance to Nagasaki, Sasebo, and other important places in southwestern Japan is no farther than from Vladivostok. Into these areas too, bombers could be flown from American bases in India, but there is as yet no way of supplying them.

In either case, an overland haul of the tremendous amounts of gasoline required by our big bombers is impracticable—except, as Mr. Lippmann stated, by way of the five thousand-mile Trans-Siberian Railroad—and, as long as the Japanese Navy has not been sunk or captured, no American tanker could hope to get through the blockade to the ports of either China or Russia.

There are other important factors we must take into account in appraising Russia's stand in the matter. For one thing, the Soviet Union has a five-year neutrality pact with Japan which the Japanese Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka negotiated in Moscow and signed on April 13, 1941; it has, therefore, still quite a few years to run.

Now it is true enough that such pacts don't mean very much these days and Russia certainly need have no scruples about helping to defeat the country which is Nazi Germany's most powerful ally, but in view of America's well-known insistence on the sanctity of treaties this country is hardly in a position to urge Moscow to disregard an international agreement.

It has been argued, on the other hand, that the Russo-Japanese treaty is not a "non-aggression" but merely a "neutrality" pact which does not exclude Russian aid to Japan's enemies and that the Soviet, in fact, continued to supply the Chinese armies after the signature of the pact.

While this may be correct from a legalistic point of view, the hard fact of the matter is that Japan would regard the grant of Siberian bases to the Allies as a *casus belli* whereas she chose to content herself with protests in the matter of Russian aid to China (obviously the grant of military bases for offensive operations is a far more serious breach of neutrality than the delivery of war materials and supplies). The Japanese have made it plain to Moscow that they will re-



gard the cession of Siberian bases to the United States as an act of war, and will deal with it accordingly.

It is, therefore, quite true, as Walter Lippmann suggested, that the demand for such bases means that Russia shall go to war with Japan, rather than let us use her territory for decisive operations which cannot be undertaken unless and until the Japanese Navy has been eliminated.

This leads us to the further question: will Russia at some time in the future join the war against Japan? To my mind, there is no doubt whatever that she will, not for the sake of America, but in her own compelling interest and at her own good time.

#### WHY RUSSIA WILL FIGHT JAPAN

When the time comes, Russia will join the war against Japan because she knows as well as anyone else that there can be no peace or security in the Far East until the greedy warlords in Tokyo have been purged from the face of the earth.

Russia, it should not be forgotten, has an exceptionally large account to settle with the Nipponese Empire. There is, to begin with, the unpaid bill for the sneak attack on Port Arthur (February 8, 1904) which opened the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 in almost exactly the same fashion as Pearl Harbor started our war with Japan. The Russians never got quite over the humiliation of that war with its disastrous defeats at Port Arthur, Mukden, and Tsushima which cost them a sizable army, almost the entire fleet, and a long-established hegemony in the Far East.

Nor have the Russians forgotten the leading role which the Japanese militarists played in the ill-starred Allied intervention of 1918 when British, American, French, and Nipponese troops seized Vladivostok and the Maritime

Provinces in the name of anti-Bolshevism. The Japanese, who were concerned far less with ideology than with loot, stayed on long after the other Allies had been withdrawn from Soviet territory; in fact, they did not evacuate their last toehold at Vladivostok until October 25, 1922, months after the intervention had broken down everywhere else.

Furthermore, a latent state of war between Russia and Japan has continually existed since the new era of Japanese expansion on the continent of Asia. From 1934 on, in particular, frequent clashes occurred not only along the ill-defined border between the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo and the Soviet protectorate of Outer Mongolia, but also along the Soviet-Manchukuo frontier.

There were many and continual causes of friction. Detention of Japanese ships by Soviet authorities, arrest of Soviet citizens by the Japanese, or vice versa; mutual charges of espionage and fiery notes of protest bandied to and fro; unauthorized flights over each other's territory—these and similar incidents were for a long time the order of the day in Russo-Japanese relations.

Up to the summer of 1938, fighting between Japanese and Soviet troops was sporadic and generally on a minor scale, but in the second half of that year and throughout the next regular battles were fought with tanks and airplanes and thousands of casualties. In August, 1938, a long and bloody struggle took place for possession of Changkufeng Hill in the area where the frontiers of the U.S.S.R., Korea, and Manchukuo meet. Again, in the period of May to July, 1939, a series of pitched battles occurred in the neighborhood of Lake Buir and along the Khalka River in the Outer Mongolian border area.

While full light has not yet been thrown on the extent and results of these clashes, most reports agree that the Japanese started the fighting and the Russians ended it. In

July, 1939, in particular, the Nipponese Army suffered very heavy casualties: 5,500 killed and wounded in one week alone according to a Soviet bulletin.

The bloody nose which the Japanese got in this undeclared war largely accounts for their reluctance to tackle the Soviet Union in earnest when the Nazi assault in the west seemingly afforded them a golden opportunity. Having called off the match in September, 1939, the Nipponese High Command decided there and then to turn its armies south instead of north as originally planned. And the oft-heralded Japanese invasion of the Soviet Maritime Provinces remained on paper, while the less generally anticipated battle of the Pacific became a tragic reality.

The Russians' unspectacular but telling success in the 1938-1939 trial of strength with Japan must have filled them with a great confidence that the aggressors would not dare come back. For when I visited Vladivostok late in 1940, the great Far Eastern city whose name means "Rule-the-East" was definitely not on the alert.

Standing on one of the bald and windswept hills that gird Vladivostok on all sides, I marveled at the spectacle below. Not so much because of its enthralling beauty, but because of an altogether unexpected atmosphere of peace and security. There, at my feet, lay what I took to be the entire Far Eastern fleet of the Soviet, gently riding at anchor on the rippling waters of the Golden Horn.

Without any attempt at concealment or dispersal, the ships nestled there in the narrow, horn-shaped bay, plainly in view for friendly or enemy eyes. There were sleek gray submarines, bouncing destroyers, shining light cruisers, all in one line like canned sardines.

That was the time when Nazi bombers were pounding night and day at the cities of Britain; when the United States and Japan were beginning to cancel ship sailings and

to recall their nationals; when great German armies were massed in Finland and Rumania. Yet Russia's Far Eastern stronghold seemed undisturbed and unconcerned. Not unprepared, though.

On the nine-day railroad journey from Moscow to Vladivostok this seeming overconfidence and *laissez-aller* of the Russians had already puzzled me. Our train closely passed by at least a dozen big and small air fields, with row upon row of military aircraft lined up as on parade. Even in the strategic sector from Lake Baikal eastward, where the Trans-Siberian Railway at points almost skirts the frontier of Manchukuo, it was the same. Several times our train stopped so close to an air field that one felt tempted to throw pebbles at the shining warbirds slumbering there beyond the fence.

Today, after two and a half years of war in European Russia and after the object lesson of Pearl Harbor, it is safe to assume that Vladivostok is very much on the alert. And as long as it is, Emperor Hirohito and Premier Tojo of Japan will not sleep too well at night. For they know better than anyone else that Vladivostok is a dagger pointed at the heart of their empire.

"What if the Russians one day do to us what we did to the Americans?" they must be constantly wondering. When will they strike? Where? In what strength? I am sure the Tokyo warlords are even more anxious to learn the answer to these harassing questions than we are here in America.

The situation is strangely reversed now that Russia has become the belligerent ally of the United States and Great Britain, and Japan is fighting on Hitler's side. Four years ago, Russia and Japan fought pitched battles but were not at war. Today they are virtually at war but not fighting—yet.

Contrary to a widespread opinion, I believe that the in-

evitable war between Russia and Japan will come through an attack launched by the former, not the latter. I think that Moscow will give the go-ahead signal to its Far Eastern armies as soon as three essential conditions have been fulfilled:

1. The German army must have been conclusively defeated. The Kremlin believes in dealing with first things first, and to the Russians the crushing of Hitlerism evidently is far more urgent and important than the liquidation of Japanese imperialism. By prematurely engaging in a two-front war with two of the greatest military powers in the world, the Russians would unnecessarily weaken themselves and in fact jeopardize the cause of all the United Nations;

2. The Japanese Navy must have been eliminated or at least greatly reduced in strength. Only when a strong American force with adequate supplies is available to take off Soviet shoulders at least half of the burden of carrying the war to Japan will Russia lend us those Siberian bases;

3. In the political relations between Moscow and Washington, a sufficient degree of frankness, confidence, and warmth must have been achieved to dispel all Soviet apprehensions about the presence of American soldiers on their soil. This is highly important, for in the Kremlin the memory of the 1918 intervention, when United States troops camped at Vladivostok, is still very much alive, while the little incident has been all but forgotten here.

Once these essential prerequisites have been fulfilled,—and the time for their fulfillment may be far nearer than we think—I feel sure that the Russians will be only too happy to lend a hand for the defeat of the common enemy Japan. They will not only give us those bases, but will send their own fighters to accompany the Flying Fortresses and Liberators far out over the Sea of Japan.

When that time comes, what can Japan do to parry the mortal blow aimed at her very heart?

Evidently, given the short distance from Japanese bases to Vladivostok, she can retaliate in kind and in great strength. But few fortified places with sufficient air cover have as yet been bombed into surrender and Vladivostok, I can testify even from the little I have seen with my own eyes, will be able to stand a lot of punishment. The city is honeycombed with underground casemates, tunnels, and shelters; it truly is a Gibraltar of the East.

An overland invasion of the Muraviev-Amursky peninsula, on the tip of which Vladivostok is situated, looks easier on a map than it would be in reality. Apart from the natural difficulties of the terrain, the invaders would have to fight their way through four concentric rings of fortifications-in-depth that surround the city. The rocky hills overlooking the port are studded with hidden gun emplacements, bunkers, and pillboxes.

To deal with a possible invasion from Manchukuo and Korea, the Russians until 1942 maintained a force estimated at 830,000 men in their Far Eastern garrisons. The bulk of this army, about 500,000 men, was massed in the region between Vladivostok and Khabarovsk, opposite Manchukuo and Korea; the remaining 300,000 stood guard over the River Amur frontier between the U.S.S.R. and Manchukuo, roughly from Khabarovsk to Chita.

It is generally assumed that part of these troops in 1942-1943 were sent to the western front where they well may have tipped the scales against the Nazi armies. How large these withdrawals have been, and whether they have been replaced, is a closely guarded military secret.

On the other side of the fence, the Japanese armies in Manchukuo and Korea are known to number at least 750,000 and possibly 1,000,000 men; these are Japan's best

fighters, well provided for with the best equipment her factories produce.

A seaborne attack on Vladivostok would also be a hazardous enterprise. Before reaching the Golden Horn, along the northern shore of which the harbor is situated, the enemy would have to run a gauntlet of mines and shore batteries concealed everywhere on the archipelago through which one gains access to the port. The cornerstone in this complex of fortifications is Russky Island just outside the harbor entrance, where the big naval station is located.

Vladivostok not only has one of the finest natural harbors in the world, kept open by ice-breakers throughout the winter, but it is also a great naval stronghold which many experts hold to be practically impregnable. It shares this quality with Russia's other main naval bases, Kronstadt, Murmansk, and Sevastopol, all of which, but the last-named, have for years successfully withstood a fierce Nazi siege; and Sevastopol too held out for many months before being taken.

But even if Vladivostok should fall in the end, the Soviet threat to Japan would not be ended. For thousands of miles to the north extends a string of secondary naval and air bases, along the coasts of the Sea of Japan and the Sea of Okhotsk: Soviet Harbor, Nikolaevsk, Okhotsk, Nagaevo, Petropavlovsk. The last-named, in particular, may one day become the starting point of decisive operations against Japan proper. Free of ice most of the year despite its northern location on a bay of Kamchatka peninsula, Petropavlovsk today is a well-equipped and strongly fortified port that could shelter a great fleet, Russian or Allied.

#### REDS VS. WHITES IN THE FAR EAST

In addition to the manifold reasons for which any Russian regime would look askance at the Japanese imperialist

expansion in the Far East, the Soviet government has a potent reason of its own to check this growing power at the first opportunity. For Japan is the instigator and patron of a permanent anti-Soviet conspiracy which has its centers in Harbin and Dairen, Manchukuo.

After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the Far East became one of the two principal centers of immigration for the hundreds of thousands of Tsarist officers and soldiers, civil servicemen, dispossessed landowners and bankers, dissenting intellectuals and others who fled from the Soviet regime; the other was the United States.

In the twenty-five years that have passed since this exodus, the two main groups of the "White" Russian emigration have traveled in opposite directions. In this country, the overwhelming majority of Russian immigrants were instantly sucked into the democratic whirlpool of the "Melting Pot"; they adopted the American way of life and forgot about going back to the old country.

It was an altogether different story with the Russians who settled in Manchuria and adjoining areas which were then still under Chinese suzerainty. China proved unable to assimilate or to democratize the "White" influx which at an early stage began to lean toward the more powerful Japanese Empire. Within a few years, the Tsarist colonies in the Far East had become practically autonomous polities, with executive and judicial organs of their own, and strongly imbued with Fascist influences.

This trend was further accentuated when the Japanese in 1931 and in the following years seized one after another of the principal centers of Russian immigration: Harbin, Tientsin, Shanghai. The invaders did not abolish the status of semi-independence the Russian colonies in these cities had enjoyed, but merely subordinated it to their own political and military purposes. These concentrations of White



Russians were to become the spearhead of the assault on Soviet Siberia of which the Japanese militarists dreamed but which they never dared carry out.

In the following years, two principal organizations of "White" Russians sprang up in Manchukuo and in other Japanese-controlled parts of Northern China. While often rivaling one another, they both are firmly controlled by Tokyo, politically, militarily, financially. They have, in fact, become integrant parts of the "East-Asiatic Co-Prosperity Sphere," tools of the Japanese bid for world hegemony.

The most important of these organizations, which consists of "anti-Communist emigrant committees" and "Russian volunteer corps" in various cities, is headed by General Gergory Mikhailovitch Semenov, a former Tsarist officer and self-styled "ataman" (Cossack chieftain), who lives at Dairen, Manchukuo. Working in close contact with the general staff of the Japanese Kwantung Army, Semenov since 1934 has built up a force of some 37,000 well-armed fighters clad in the uniforms of the old Tsarist Army and flying the Russian tricolor.

Semenov's headquarters are at the "Russian House" at Tientsin. His organ is the Russian-language paper *Renaissance of Asia* which is published by the Tientsin Anti-Communist Committee. It was this committee and the "Russian Volunteer Corps" attached to it who were the principal organizers of the anti-British demonstrations and of the blockade of the British and French concessions in Tientsin in June, 1939. A sister organization in Shanghai started the anti-Semitic riots of July, 1941.

Early in October, 1941, the Japanese military authorities in Tientsin ordered all able-bodied Russian men between the ages of 17 and 40 to register with this Anti-Communist Committee for compulsory military service. Even from

Tsingtao, Peiping, and other cities, Russian draftees were sent to Tientsin for military training in the ranks of the "Volunteer Corps." One week before Pearl Harbor, Major Batase, the Japanese liaison officer with the corps, formally incorporated it into the Imperial Army.

Hand in glove with Semenov's legions works the equally militarized Russian Fascist party whose leader is the thirty-six-year-old, bearded Konstantin Vladimirovitch Rodzaevsky. Secretly founded in Harbin in 1925, the Russian Fascist party languished under the Chinese regime but became a powerful factor after the Japanese invasion.

Rodzaevsky's men have combined all the world's Fascist symbols and slogans. They wear black shirts like Il Duce's minions, and swastikas like the Nazis. Their battlecry is the Japanese "Banzai!," while the motto on their banners smacks of Vichy: "God-Work-Fatherland." The party publishes a daily paper *Natsia* in Harbin which proudly claims to have issued over 140 pamphlets "unmasking the Jewish and Masonic cliques as well as Communism." Rodzaevsky claims 32,000 followers.

Headquarters of the Russian Fascist party are at Harbin, where a "Supreme Council" also functions. There are nineteen more local units throughout Manchukuo, all of them strictly organized along military lines; one of them, the "Russian Club" of Manchouli, is less than two miles away from the Soviet border.

Although things have not been coming their way lately, the Semenovs and Rodzaevskys still hope eventually to return to Russia with the aid of Japanese bayonets. With their tens of thousands of trained legionnaires ready to strike, they impatiently wait for the green light from Tokyo to march into Siberia.

As long as Japan's military ascendancy has not been broken on the Asiatic continent, these White Guards will

remain a serious threat to the Soviet regime. Stalin, who is so much concerned about his country's security in the west, is not likely to forget about the threat from the east. He will settle for nothing less than the complete liquidation of Semenov, Rodzaevsky, and their Japanese masters, of that I am convinced.

#### THE GREATEST POWER IN ASIA

There can be little doubt that the U.S.S.R. after the war will be the greatest power in Asia as well as in Europe. Its influence will make itself strongly felt in every country on the Eurasian continent, from Cape Finisterre to the Bering Strait. The limits of this ascendancy will be the natural limits of land power.

What are the Soviet plans for Asia? Walter Duranty gives this answer:

What Mr. Stalin wants is an independent Soviet Republic of Manchuria, affiliated with the U.S.S.R.; a similar republic of Korea, and even perhaps the Northwestern Chinese Soviet Republic of Sinkiang, Ningsia and Shensi. Mr. Stalin does not share the esteem for Chiang Kai-shek that the Americans and British have. Last, but not least, Russia wants the Liaotang peninsula, her lost fortress of Port Arthur and the great port of Dairen, which in Russian is known as Dalny, meaning "far off." (Quotation by Edward Hunter in the *New York Post*, March 27, 1943.)

Duranty, who has spent twenty years in Russia, speaks with authority on most things Russian, but he has not always correctly appraised Stalin's intentions. (For example, in a Tokyo dispatch released by the North American Newspaper Alliance on May 1, 1941, Duranty cabled: "I believe there is just about as much chance of turning Soviet Russia against Germany, or even detaching Russia from Germany, as of frying snowballs. . . ." That was eight weeks before the German-Russian war.)

Until recently though, Duranty's forecast was quite plausible. There were signs that Stalin envisaged in the East as in the West an outer layer of more or less independent satellite states to buttress the mighty Soviet commonwealth and form a transition to the capitalist world.

However, the joint declaration issued on December 1, 1943, following the Cairo conference of Roosevelt, Churchill and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek would seem to dispose of such plans. Indeed, this statement specifically pledged the return to China of "all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa and the Pescadores. . . ." At the same time, it promised that Korea "in due course" shall become free and independent. While Russia was not a party to the Cairo conference and to this declaration, there can be no doubt that she had been consulted and her approval was implied in Stalin's meeting with Roosevelt and Churchill at Teheran only a few days later.

Even so, the possibility remains that at some future date Manchuria, Korea, Sinkiang and the Communist-controlled provinces of Northwestern China will follow the example set on March 12, 1936, by Outer Mongolia when that country, without formally repudiating Chinese suzerainty, concluded a pact of mutual assistance with the U.S.S.R. and opened its borders to Red Army garrisons.

I do not think that Stalin has territorial or other designs on China proper. He undoubtedly would like to see a strong, truly independent Chinese republic take its proper place in a new Asia freed from the bonds both of Japanese imperialism and colonial exploitation. Stalin may not like Chiang Kai-shek, but there has been no hostility between Moscow and Chungking in recent years. As a matter of fact, the Soviet government, in spite of the tremendous strain placed on its resources by the Nazi invasion, continues to

send the Chinese armies whatever supplies and equipment the Red Army can spare.

The greatest obstacle to real Soviet-Chinese friendship is the still unsettled relationship between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party. There have been signs in recent months that China, which hitherto has been ruled pretty much like a dictatorship, is on her way to becoming a truly democratic republic. Given the strength of the Chinese Communist movement, it will undoubtedly make its weight felt in the free post-war elections which Chiang Kai-shek has promised to his people. It then will be up to the Kuomintang to find a *modus vivendi* which, without turning the country over to Bolshevism, will direct the Communist aspirations and energies into constructive and democratic channels.

In Asia as in Europe, the Soviet government, I believe, will exercise a restraining rather than an activating influence on the existing Communist parties. It will not seek the violent overthrow of any regime that is not anti-Soviet or infected with the Fascist virus. Out of regard for its partners in world control, the United States and Great Britain, if for no other reason, the Soviet Union will avoid anything that might look like a policy of "Communizing" the world.

On the other hand, however, it is evident that the Soviet government, within the sphere of its interests and influence—in other words, throughout the Eurasian continent—will not tolerate the suppression or violent persecution of Communist movements and individuals. I have already mentioned the "Red Monroe Doctrine" which I believe is in the making and I feel sure that it will have a profound influence on the post-war political systems in Asia as well as in Europe.

In the Far East as in Central or Western Europe, Ameri-

can, British, and Russian forces are likely to meet and to fight side by side in the near future. When the war is over, the diplomats must continue their work. Each of the three powers will have its views on the kind of world it would like to see arise over the ashes of what is gone forever; each will have to make concessions to the two others. In Asia as in Europe.

It will not always be easy to bridge the differences. In Asia, while there are no such vexing frontier problems as trouble the United Nations in Europe, the question of open markets, of investments and concessions, and, perhaps more than anything else, the British Empire ties may become subjects of controversy between Washington, London and Moscow.

There would be no point in reviewing any of these problems now. Unlike the issues at stake in Europe, they are not yet ripe for discussion. While the outcome is certain, the end of the war in the Far East is not yet in sight. When that war has reached a stage comparable to the present situation in Europe, the time will have come to go into the details of a lasting settlement in Asia.

In the meantime, the pessimists who see a gulf yawning between Russia's position and ours might take some comfort in the symbolic closeness of our countries up there in the Arctic corner where America and Asia meet.

There, in the middle of Bering Strait, two small islands rise above the icy waters, facing each other a little dubiously across the Arctic fog. They are the Diomedes, the Big and the Little. One is in Asia, the other is in America. One belongs to the U.S.S.R., the other to the U.S.A. The distance between them is just a mile. That is easy to bridge—is it not?

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## CHAPTER IX

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# Can We Do Business With Stalin?

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WE COULDN'T do business with Hitler any more than one can do business with the devil. Some of us suspected that rather a long time ago, while others have been a little slow in grasping it. Douglas Miller's excellent book \* was a great eye-opener for Americans, but Pearl Harbor was an even better one. Today America knows that the only way to do business with Hitler is to smash him.

This realization would be all to the good were there not so many people who regard Hitler and Stalin as birds of a feather and can see no more difference between Bolshevism and Nazism than between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. This is a dangerous fallacy that must be destroyed. There is all the difference in the world between the two men and the two systems of government they represent.

It cannot be denied that there are certain analogies. In the field of power politics as in the ruthless suppression of all opposition at home, the methods employed by Hitler and by Stalin have often been strikingly similar. The Gestapo is not much worse than the OGPU was in its time, there have been inexcusable purges (along with some very justified ones) in Soviet Russia as well as in Nazi Germany,

\* *You Can't Do Business With Hitler* (Little, Brown, 1941).

and terror is terror, whether Red or White. I have no greater desire to whitewash the past excesses of Bolshevism than to whitewash Nazism's crimes.

But when it comes to the question whether or not we can do business with the Soviet, we must not allow our sound judgment to be befogged by facile comparisons. The fact is that the similarities between Nazism and Bolshevism are mostly on the surface, whereas the differences are fundamental.

To begin with, it is simply not true that the Soviet Union is a totalitarian dictatorship on a par with Hitler's *Führerstaat* and Il Duce's now defunct corporative state. The parallel is very weak and unfair. It is usually drawn without much knowledge of the elements of comparison involved, or in a mood of unreasoning vituperation.

Trained observers, especially Americans with their in-born democratic instinct, are not in the habit of putting the Soviet regime on a level with the Fascist dictatorships. They sense, even if they do not always fully define it, an underlying essential difference. It is interesting to note that many prominent Americans, including quite a few of established conservative views, have given at least some measure of applause to the Soviet experiment, while hardly any—I mean people who count—have ever aired the slightest sympathy for the Nazi regime.

It is also a highly significant, if little noted, fact that the Bolsheviks—or perhaps I should rather say the present-day Stalinists—do not attack and revile the word “democracy” the way all Fascists do. On the contrary, the term and its derivatives constantly crop up in official Soviet statements, press comments, and in the Soviet-sponsored manifestoes of Free German, Polish, Yugoslav, and other groups. One might argue, of course, that what the Communists mean by “democracy” is a far cry from the American concept of



it; but even so, it strikes me as meaningful that the Soviets pay tribute to the ideal we honor so deep in our hearts, whereas the Nazis and Fascists never had anything but scorn for it.

Besides, what does democracy mean? It means government of the people, by the people, for the people. By this standard, the Soviet Union definitely has a democratic regime, whereas quite as decidedly Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy have, or had, not. No honest person would argue that the Third Reich or Mussolini's Italy were run by or for the people; but the U.S.S.R. is. It is not governed by, and for the exclusive benefit of, a gang of racketeers as are all Fascist states. Nor does the Soviet government claim to derive its authority from God, Destiny, or any other supernatural power, but simply and honestly from the source of all government rights, the people.

As a matter of fact, the U.S.S.R. in the last few years has developed a political and economic system that differs from any other existing commonwealth. It is neither a dictatorship nor a democracy in the usually accepted sense of these terms. It is an absolute novelty, a body politic *sui generis*.

I cannot here go into the details of the Soviet system of government. Such an analysis would fall altogether outside the scope of this book. But I want to point out that the difference between "Soviet democracy"—yes, the Russians do use this expression—and Western democracy is one of technique rather than essentials. And this technique, it should be remembered, is still very much in the experimental stage. The new Soviet Constitution of December 5, 1936, was a great stride toward our concept of democracy and away from the early Soviet system born of revolution and civil war. The outbreak of war may have temporarily stopped this evolution, as it does everywhere, but the post-war period will give it new impetus. With victory, and the

return to normal conditions, the Russian people again will receive greater personal and political freedom, and the present differences between "Soviet democracy" and our form of it will gradually but surely disappear.

On the plane of international relations, the difference between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia is even more marked. Hitler's or Mussolini's word could never be trusted, but Stalin's word can, and it does command respect the world over.

Brendan Bracken, the British Minister of Information, was quoted by the *New York Times* of August 28, 1943, as saying at his New York press conference "that Russia had never broken her word since the establishment of the Soviet system."

While I do not unreservedly subscribe to this statement, the fact remains that Soviet Russia's international record is, on the whole, as good as Nazi Germany's is bad. In particular, the Soviets have proved themselves scrupulously honest in their business transactions with foreign countries.

Businessmen, financiers, diplomats without a shred of sympathy for the Bolshevist regime have repeatedly attested to the sound business morals of the Soviet authorities. They pay cash for most of the things they buy, seldom ask for an extension of the short-term credits granted, meet their bills regularly and fully.

The Soviet refusal to settle the foreign debts of the Tsarist regime cannot in fairness be cited as evidence to the contrary. The loans granted to the Tsar by French and Belgian capitalists were largely used to build strategic railroads in Poland or served other purposes from which the Russian people derived no benefit. Capitalists who lend money to an oppressive and unpopular regime must know that such transactions involve the risk of revolutionary annulment. What is important is the fact that the Soviet government

has never defaulted on any of the debts or other obligations incurred by itself.

In past years, the Soviets have been, as they undoubtedly again will be, good buyers whose large purchases on the world market frequently had a decisive effect on the movement of price levels. They bought machines and other equipment in Germany and in Britain, cotton in the United States. In exchange, Russia sold abroad large amounts of cereals and other raw materials or paid with the rapidly growing yield of her Siberian goldfields.

All this is important and gratifying because sooner or later Uncle Sam and Uncle Joe will have to get together at a conference table and strike a bargain, a hard bargain. The only alternative to a fair and honest deal would be a permanent state of total armament in an atmosphere of rivalry and latent hostility which might well ultimately lead to a new and even more devastating world war.

#### MUST WE FIGHT RUSSIA?

There is a widespread feeling in this country that America eventually will have to fight Russia. Some people will tell you that the Joint Chiefs of Staff are even now preparing for such a contingency and that the real reason why this country is building up an army of 7,500,000 men is fear and distrust of Russia.

Such loose talk as this can have quite as disastrous effects in political as in military affairs. Actually, there is not the slightest basis for a Russo-American war. All the traditional causes of conflict between nations, like atavistic hatred, dynastic rivalries, frontier disputes, economic cut-throat competition, and so forth are conspicuously absent from American-Russian relations.

Indeed, the more one ponders over the premises and antecedents of America's relationship with Russia, the clearer

emerges a picture of two nations predestined for solid friendship and mutually profitable intercourse.

Discounting the half-hearted intervention of some United States contingents at Arkhangelsk and Vladivostok in the troubled period following the Bolshevik Revolution, there has never been a war between America and Russia.

As a matter of fact, these two countries are the only Great Powers of the white race which have never been involved in war against each other. Each of them, and all others in the Great Powers' Group, has at one time or another fought everybody else. Look how in the comparative table below America and Russia form the only bright spot, marked *No War*.

<i>U.S.A.</i>	<i>England</i>	<i>France</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Russia</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>
England	—	1803	1939	1940	1854	1812
France	1803	—	1939	1940	1854	1778 *
Germany	1939	1939	—	1916	1941	1941
Italy	1940	1940	1916	—	1941	1941
Russia	1854	1854	1941	1941	—	NO WAR

NOTE: Where more than one war has been fought between two given nations, only the starting year of the last war is listed.

While America and Russia have never been enemies, they have been comrades-in-arms in two world wars. By and large, however, it is true that there has been less physical and spiritual contact between them than between any other two great powers of the white race. This lack of contact, which is the natural result of geographical separation, has had both good and bad consequences.

On one hand, it has prevented war with all its harmful after-effects like irredentism, minority problems, the spirit

\* Not formally declared.

of revenge, and so forth; on the other hand, it has resulted in a conspicuous lack of mutual knowledge, understanding, and sympathy.

Whatever issues have arisen between the two countries belonged mostly in the field of ideology and principles. Americans never liked Russia's rulers and the autocratic regimes that went with them. They were aroused as much by the purges and "liquidations" of the Soviet regime as they had been before by the pogroms and deportations of Tsarist Russia.

As to the Russians, the vast majority of them used to be so illiterate, so ignorant of foreign countries, that far-off America was little more than a name to them. Now, under the Soviet regime, they know a great deal more about the world in general and the United States in particular, but this knowledge is to a certain extent warped by anti-capitalist propaganda.

Nations do not ordinarily go to war over ideological dissensions. The era of crusades is past, all Hitler's efforts notwithstanding. Democratic France was for decades allied with the Tsarist autocracy; Fascist Italy maintained the best of relations with Communist Russia until she was forced by the Nazis to declare war.

One need not, therefore, fear that America and Russia will fight in arms over theories and principles any more than they have done in the past, unless either of them should come to suspect the other of interventionist designs. Civilized people don't care whether the neighbor practices a creed different from their own; but they will resist attempts at forcible conversion. That goes for Russia as well as for the United States.

But wars are often stumbled into rather than deliberately sought. Millions of decent, democratic, peace-loving people have resigned themselves to the idea that wars are inevita-

ble, that as long as night follows day, rain follows sunshine, winter follows summer, there will be wars after periods of peace.

The embittered and disillusioned who reason thus are an easy prey for the purposely malevolent who seek to disturb the peace between America and Russia for selfish or mistakenly "patriotic" reasons. They must not be allowed to sway this nation at what may well become the most crucial period in its history.

#### WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY

We may not like all of Russia's war aims. We may find that her territorial aspirations in this or that respect go beyond what is justifiable on ethnographical, historical, and strategical grounds. We may be dissatisfied at some of her plans for the shape of post-war Europe. We may well wish to obtain guarantees beyond the formal dissolution of the Comintern that there will be no outside interference in American affairs.

So let us get together, speak our minds frankly, and iron out existing differences. Stalin, who does not dislike America and has a sound respect for might, will not be as intractable as some people seem to think.

But I doubt very much that Mr. William C. Bullitt was delivering a piece of sound advice when he suggested giving Stalin the donkey treatment by "holding a carrot in front of his nose and a club behind his tail."

No, the way to deal with Russia is not by coaxing and clubbing her. Such high-handed methods, applicable perhaps in the case of some half-civilized, backward nations won't do where a first-rate power, and an ally at that, is concerned.

The way to deal with Russia is the way of friendship, aid,

and exchange. Let us talk as equals and bargain in a friendly but determined manner. That is the way Stalin is wont to do business, and Uncle Sam too.

Russia, after this ordeal, will need many things which America, and perhaps America alone, can give her: credit, machinery, experts, patents, technical advice and assistance. The United States will need Russian raw materials, but even more Russia's wholehearted cooperation in maintaining peace and security in Europe and in the Far East.

This is a sound basis for a solid understanding. Without undue pressure, without too much talk about gratitude—a rare thing in international relations—America will be able to trade a good many political concessions from Russia by offering generous assistance in that country's reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The time has not come yet to go into the details of a possible compromise between Russia's and America's ideas for a new world order. Between now and the peace conference, many conditions may change. New bargaining points may come up, while others may drop out of the picture.

Evidently the first thing to do is to explore and determine each other's stand on controversial issues. This book is an attempt to establish the facts and to present the Russian view in so far as it can be determined from authoritative statements and circumstantial evidence. By and large, I think, there is not much mystery as to what Russia wants and why.

Already the first determined efforts toward a comprehensive Anglo-American-Russian agreement have been made at the two great tri-power conferences that marked the late fall of 1943 as the decisive phase of the war in Europe: the Foreign Ministers' conference in Moscow in the second half of October, and the historic first meeting at Teheran (November 27 to December 1) of the three heads of govern-

ment, President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill and Premier Stalin.

More convincingly than any other recent manifestation of Soviet foreign policy the Teheran Declaration has given proof of Russia's good will toward her allies, of her earnest desire to keep the future peace and of her gradual return to the ideals of democracy.

Having pledged the total defeat of Nazi Germany through closely coordinated blows "from the east, west and south," Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin solemnly promised that their "concord will make an enduring peace." The Declaration then placed the three great Allied leaders on record for a policy of international cooperation, justice and freedom for all:

"We recognize fully the supreme responsibility resting upon us and all the nations to make a peace which will command good will from the overwhelming masses of the peoples of the world and banish the scourge and terror of war for many generations. . . . We shall seek the cooperation and active participation of all nations—large and small—whose peoples, in heart and in mind, are dedicated, as are our own peoples, to the elimination of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance. We will welcome them as they may choose to come into the world family of democratic nations."

This is a great step forward on the right road. It is, of course, only a beginning. For many of the knotty problems discussed in this book, especially the whole complex of post-war frontiers, the conversations of Moscow, Cairo and Teheran have not yet provided the final answer—or if they have, the world has not been told at this writing. In all probability these issues will have to await settlement at the peace conference.

But even so, momentous progress has been achieved. Con-



tact has been established and will be maintained. The machinery to deal with the questions still open is being set up. And, most important of all, we have the word of each of the Big Three that they will not allow any disagreement to stand between this war-weary world and a new era of peace.

War cannot be avoided when madmen hold the reins of power. It can be avoided by wise, conciliatory statesmanship. Where there's a will, there's a way.



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"What Does Russia Want?" is a question uppermost in our minds these days. Most people concede that Russia, having made such an outstanding contribution to victory over the Axis, is entitled to a weighty say about the making of peace and the shape of the post-war world; but very few people have anything but a hazy idea of Russia's war aims, her territorial ambitions, the role she envisions for herself in the world of tomorrow. Does Moscow wish to "Bolshevize" the whole world? Is Stalin dreaming of a Russian super-empire stretching from the Channel to the Aegean and the Bosphorus in the limits of justice, peace can and Europe, and to the far corners of Asia? Or assured.

will he be satisfied with the boundaries of the Soviet Union as they were in 1939, 1940, or 1941? What are the facts about the Russo-Polish frontier dispute? Can the Baltic States look forward to independent existence after the war? Will a victorious Russia ally herself to a defeated Germany and turn on her partners in victory?

These are momentous and thorny questions. On the answers that can be found to them may well depend the fate of our generation. If Russia's ambitions are immoderate another war may be inevitable in a few years hence. If, on the other hand, they keep conclusions will not satisfy all sides and all interests concerned—an impossible task—but they make a vital contribution and lift the Russian controversy to a plane of sounder knowledge and better understanding.

In ten years of writing, Joachim Joesten has devoted most of his time and energy to the study of territorial and political problems of Europe. He has written several books and countless articles on international affairs. His knowledge of Russia is based on three visits to that country, including one prolonged stay and one cross-country trip from Riga to Vladivostok, and on the continuous study of Russian affairs.

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